

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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University of North Carolina
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Congress of
New Initiative

Gus Hall: Dialogue,
Not Confrontation
The Netherlands
and Euromissiles



COGS AND SCREWS
FOR WASHINGTON'S MACHINE



"THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE YOUTH"

That is the title of a permanently operating international seminar organized on the initiative of the foreign students at the Lumumba Friendship University in Moscow. Why are there no unemployed in the U.S.S.R.? Can a trade union cancel a decision made by the management? Can women be members of Soviet trade unions? Such questions, usually asked by newcomers to the seminar from some Asian, African or Latin American country sound very naive to students who have attended the seminar for any length of time. They are more interested in questions like what the Soviet unions are doing to promote the acceleration of the social and economic development and scientific and technological progress, their role in the improvement of working and living conditions, in educating the new man and creating a healthy, creative climate in every working collective.

The foreign students believe that the rich experience of Soviet trade union work will be very useful to them in their home countries. "Here we are learning how to uphold the interests of the working people, how to develop the qualities we need as organizers of the trade union and youth movement, acquiring habits of practical work," says Srinivasan

Harinath, a student from India. His friends Nelson Luis Vicent of Venezuela, Sidibe Abdullaye of Mali, Yadav Ramanand of Nepal and other seminar students share his views.

For many years functionaries of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU) have been helping Friendship University students to familiarize themselves with the activities of the Soviet trade unions. Joint debates and symposiums, readers' conferences and discussions on a wide range of sub-

jects relating to the trade union and youth movement have become regular features. And friendship with the students representing the youth of more than a hundred countries of the world enables Profizdat, AUCCTU publishers, to make direct contact with their foreign readers. Books and pamphlets put out by Profizdat in foreign languages go to 145 different countries.

A readers' conference.



At the Profizdat book exhibition.

Not long ago an exhibition of books published by Profizdat was arranged in the Friendship University. On the stands and shelves in the spacious University vestibule were hundreds of books, pamphlets and albums. The students were free to take off the shelves, leaf through and take with them any that appealed to them. Such exhibitions are traditional here. And although the exhibits were constantly replenished, by the time the exhibition closed there was not a single book left on the shelves.

Photos by
I. Maslov
and
V. Pano

WE WON'T SHUT THE DOOR

Every time brings its challenges—that is how it has always been. But the answers to those challenges do not come of themselves. The momentous, truly worldwide significance of the 27th Congress of the CPSU just over consists precisely in the fact that it not only analyzed the past stage in the development of our society and the entire international situation, but gave the answers to the new challenges of our time.

That the congress commanded the keenest interest in all countries is an incontrovertible fact. But equally true is it that the approaches to it differed. And it could not have been otherwise, for ever since the time of the "Communist Manifesto" the combined forces of reaction have been engaged in a "crusade" against the recasting of society on a just basis. Regardless of the divergence of viewpoints, the world eagerly awaited from the party of the Soviet Communists an answer to the fundamental issue of our epoch—the issue of peace or war. After all, the congress met at a time when glimmers of light appeared in the sky darkened by thunderheads. Would these glimmers be preserved? Would they be widened? Everyone asked these questions.

These were anxious questions, for while a programme calling for a new approach to international relations, the elimination of nuclear weapons and the creation of a comprehensive system of international security was proclaimed from the congress rostrum, U.S. leaders loosed on the world an avalanche of militarist pronouncements. While Moscow called for a new approach, for the renunciation of bankrupt positions-of-strength methods, of attempts to achieve military superiority, Washington expounded something altogether different. As if unsure of himself (and his audience), the U.S. President insisted that "strength is the most persuasive argument we have." It was on arguments of this kind that the United States' essentially negative reply to the Soviet proposal of January 15 was built. Not to mention the murky flood of calls for interference in the affairs of other countries, all the way to the demand for direct intervention in Nicaragua.

It is noteworthy that each time a positive

step forward is taken, pressure to the contrary is brought to bear on world public opinion, and efforts made to perpetuate confrontation in interstate relations. We have been made the target of such provocation more than once: take, for instance, the U-2 flight, or the American bombing of Vietnam in 1972 on the eve of a projected visit by a U.S. President to Moscow, a visit that was to mark—and did mark—a change for the better in world affairs.

And now? In his closing speech at the congress Mikhail Gorbachev, referring to Washington's demonstratively negative reaction to the Soviet proposals, put the question pointblank: "What are we to do, comrades? Slam the door shut? It is not excluded that this is just what they want us to do."

The stratagem of the opponents of détente is plain to see. The idea is to compel the U.S.S.R. to withdraw its proposals, to cease to elaborate new ideas, to break political and economic ties with the West, and not to upset anyone by advancing plans that could foil the designs of the Pentagon. In that case it would be easier to persuade the ordinary and, moreover, frightened American or West European that he has no choice but to climb into his private bomb shelter and wait for the end of the world.

No, the Soviet Union will not give the enemies of peace and cooperation that pleasure. Soviet foreign policy, and the policy of the entire socialist community, will not play into the hands of those who would accustom humanity to the idea that a nuclear catastrophe, an arms race both on earth and in outer space, are inevitable. Needless to say, it is more difficult to induce people to overcome scepticism than to repeat pessimistic stereotypes. But if scepticism is a matter of inertia, optimism is endowed with its own driving force. Soviet people have a long-term programme of action worked out by the Communist Party. The congress went on record that we intend to work persistently and vigorously for the elimination of nuclear weapons, radical limitation of the arms race, and ensuring reliable international security for all. The foreign policy of socialism has always stood and will continue to stand for this. It is ready to cooperate with all who are against the nuclear madness and for the preservation and strengthening of peace.

FROM OUR MAILBAG

◆ One of the most savage military-police regimes has been overthrown in Haiti. Unfortunately, many of us naively believed that the United States played some sort of positive role in this. Actually, however, the U.S. is merely interested in preserving this country as its virtual colony. For Haiti this would be fatal, for it would mean nothing more than exchanging one set of oppressors for another. But however complicated the situation there is at present, the Haitian people will hopefully be able to defend their interests, if only at a high cost, and win their freedom and independence. And in this they will undoubtedly have the support of progressives everywhere.

Enzo BANCALE
Solaro, Italy

◆ The Angolans know very well why Jonas Savimbi went to the United States—he went for American help to hinder the struggle of the Angolan people for happiness and prosperity, to prevent them from carrying out the decisions of the second congress of the MPLA-Party of Labour, decisions which give us strength, hope and confidence in the morrow. But our people are not afraid of international imperialism, or of men like the U.S. President, Savimbi or Botha. And we shall be able to stand up for ourselves in spite of the machinations of the imperialists who are giving aid to the UNITA bandits. The Angolan people know full well who is creating difficulties for our country against which the cruel undeclared war is being fought. Hence the hatred for imperialism that is maturing in the heart of every politically conscious Angolan.

Nelson Felisberto DE JESUS
Angolan student
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

◆ You rightly point to the sinister consequences of rampant militarism. Militarism is doing incalculable harm to American society. It produces a climate of violence, pessimism, hysterical chauvinism, corruption and fear. People are immersed in this climate from childhood. The result is the destruction of such human qualities as self-respect, pride, compassion, cooperation and hope for the future. And this has a corresponding effect on productivity.

I should like to touch on a point taken up in your issue No. 52 for 1985. Unemployment indeed has a psychological effect on people, on society as a whole. Human misery and degradation do not exist in a vacuum! The destruction of dignity and pride by unemployment is contagious. It engenders in all members of society fear, bitterness, hopelessness, cynicism. We all lose our sense of the future.

Charles OBLER
Boston, U.S.A.

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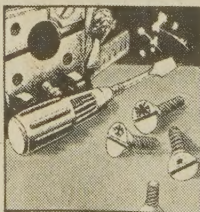
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Washington's intention to spread the arms race to space has met with widespread condemnation. Prominent statesmen and leading scientists continue to expose the aggressive character of Strategic Defence Initiative. Why then have the governments of some countries allied with the U.S. agreed to take part in preparations for "star wars" in spite of public protest! (See pp. 18-23.)

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27th CONGRESS: STRATEGY OF ACCELERATION AND PEACE

VADIM ZAGLADIN

A week has passed since the 27th Congress of the CPSU ended. Already a week or only a week? Both. Let me elaborate.

Already a week—yes, for a whole week now thoughts of the congress and its conclusions and appraisals have been uppermost in the minds of people in our country, and not only in our country. And a good deal has been done in this week. The spirit of the congress, its inspired, creative atmosphere, is making itself felt more and more in the practical endeavours of Soviet people.

Only a week—yes, no more than that, which means that the realization of the ideas of the congress has only just begun. Ahead there is a long road, by no means easy, intensive work to carry out the congress decisions. This is talked and thought about in our country. It is also a subject for reflection abroad.

During the past week much has been said and written on this score. Today we can confidently say that the main conclusion drawn in both East and West from the deliberations and decisions of the congress is this: the congress **significantly heightened the prestige of socialism, enhanced its appeal both as an ideology and as social practice.**

But is this surprising? On the one hand, the congress, its frank and open, incisive, critical and at the same time constructive discussion demonstrated the strength of the Party, its close ties with the people, and its vast creative potential. On the other hand, the realistic, thoroughly thought-out, considered decisions adopted at the congress orient the country on accelerated advance to new qualitative heights in all spheres of life.

Let us not repeat what has already been said (although generally speaking the materials of the congress merit re-reading over and over again, deep study and consideration). Let us pinpoint what is most important.

Acceleration of the country's socio-economic development should lead to the renewal of its production potential. The highest achievements of science and technology, the most up-to-date organizational and managerial solutions, and top quality of production—all these

are to be the hallmark of the Soviet economy as it approaches the 21st century.

Will reaching these targets be a difficult task? Unquestionably. However, the ways to its accomplishment are clearly defined, and, what is most important, the call to tackle it is addressed not only to the managerial, organizing echelon, but primarily to the people, to all working men and women.

It is a well-known Marxist axiom that the bigger the task, the more the broad masses must be set into motion. Our Party is guided by this in carrying its plans to the people, the true master of the land and creator of all its wealth.

Moreover, it is not simply a one-way process. The congress decisions were adopted following a broad, nationwide discussion. These decisions reflect the requirements, wishes and hopes of the people. What the Soviet people want was capsuled by the congress in the concise formulations of its decisions. Lenin once said that a real party must always be able to find "the right way to convert a definitely formed **opinion** in the **decisions** of its next congress." The 27th Congress followed this counsel in incorporating the opinions of the people in its decisions.

However, fulfilment of these decisions presupposes not only the material strengthening of socialism, but its **socio-political strengthening** as well. Acceleration is the keynote here too.

What is most important in this sphere?

Socialism made the means of production public property, the property of the entire people. Opportunities were thereby opened for the planned development of the economy, its steady growth free of crises and attendant social perturbations. The crucial thing, however, is that production relations and the entire complex of social relations, the system of management of the economy, should be fully consonant with the requirements of public ownership, its character. At the present stage of the country's development this conformity is ensured by the decisions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU.

The entire people is the master of the land. But the sense of proprietorship can become an effective instrument of creative effort only if it takes the

form of the constant and active participation of the people in management, in husbanding public property. The congress decisions indicate realistic avenues to the realization of this cardinal principle of socialism.

There is no dearth of debates on democracy in the world. As a rule, we are accused of being wanting in democracy. On what grounds? On the plea that our understanding of democracy is not the one customary in the capitalist world, in other words, because we do not have bourgeois democracy. We do not have rival parties fighting for power, and we have no opposition. For this reason our ideological opponents talk about the "weakness" or even "absence" of democracy in our country.

The literal meaning of the word "democracy" is "government by the people." Why, then, should government by the people in a country where there are no antagonistic classes necessarily presuppose the existence of an opposition?

Democracy, then, is government by the people. But what kind of government by the people is there in the Western countries where the governing is done only by the representatives of those who own the means of production, in other words, the capitalist class, while the working people are allotted the passive role of the governed?

What sort of democracy can there be in the countries of the West where the boss lays down the law and is able arbitrarily to deprive the worker of his job.

We do not have such "democracy," and never will. In this respect we shall never live up to the hopes of our critics. For democracy as we see it is government by the people. And all the decisions of the 27th Congress are aimed at ensuring ever fuller participation of the working people in the administration of the affairs of state and society.

Hence the provision in the new text of our Party Programme concerning the heightening of the role of work collectives to whom should belong the decisive say in determining how things should be done at the point of production. Hence also the Programme provision calling for more and more

questions being decided only with the consent of the trade unions, the Young Communist League, and other public organizations. Hence too the Programme provision concerning steady improvement of the work of the Soviets, which should exercise to the full their rights as bodies of people's government, their powers which extend to all spheres of life on the territory under their jurisdiction.

This enumeration could be continued. And it may be confidently said that in each case these standards of genuine democracy which fully accord with the ideals of socialism, with the social and political canons of our socialist society, are literally counterindicated in bourgeois society, totally unacceptable to it.

The governors and the governed in any capitalist country are opposites that can never come together. In our country both are members of the same working classes and essentially represent one integral whole.

In regard to the absence in our country of competing parties, we are at times reproached for ignoring the "pluralism" of society. We have no pluralism as it is understood in the West. We have no confrontation between antagonistic class and political forces, and no parties and groupings representing their interests. Nor will we ever have them, for let me repeat, we have no classes hostile to one another and no political groupings stemming from them.

But this does not mean that the diversity of the interests of the various classes, social and professional groups, etc., is not taken into account in our country. Our society is a society of diversity in unity, or, if you wish, unity in diversity. The interests of all classes, nationalities, professional, age, and other groups are fully taken into consideration. Each of these is in a position to formulate their interests, to give expression to them, and to uphold them. The 27th Congress paid particular attention to ensuring fuller representation of women and such a large social group as veteran workers. Special countrywide organizations are to be set up to this end.

Needless to say, the main representative of the whole of society, of all its sections, a representative capable of taking into account and combining the diverse public interests is our Leninist Party—the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

This was most convincingly demonstrated by the congress. It was addressed by people giving expression to the interests of all the classes and groups that make up our society. They were all listened to with the keenest in-

terest. And the views they voiced were duly reflected in the decisions of the congress.

The strengthening of the social and political unity of society and the heightening of the quality of its unity are pivoted on the firm, inviolable principles of socialism. Of particular importance among them is the principle of social justice.

The implementation of this principle is the object of the entire social policy of the CPSU, which is projected at each working according to his ability and conscience and receiving for his labour what he merits. This social policy is the foundation of the political stability of our society. Hence the importance attached to it in the deliberations of the congress and in the documents it adopted.

It is precisely this social policy that ensures also the steady strengthening of the moral unity of our society, underlying which is the socialist principle of collectivism.

The reliable foundation of this principle is public ownership of the means of production. However, it does not become established in people's thinking and everyday life overnight. This is impeded by negative phenomena, both those inherited from the past and those engendered by shortcomings or miscalculations, in particular by violations of social justice.

Because of this, the congress decisions aimed at strengthening and further developing socialist democracy and the pursuance of an unfaltering social policy are inseparably linked with activation of the educational work conducted by the Party.

Some of our Western critics often interpret educational work as an attempt by the Party to impose its views on people, to exercise a sort of spiritual diktat in society. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The educational work conducted by the Party is a matter of the conscious reflection in its activity of the great moral heritage of our people, on the one hand, and, on the other, of the principles engendered by the very nature of socialism, by our way of life. Here, just as in the political and economic spheres, the Party generalizes, synthesizes the wisdom of the popular masses and gives effect to it in its practical activity.

Incidentally, capitalism too "educates" the masses in its own way. By various means it inculcates in them the cult of violence, of the superman, money-grubbing, permissiveness, disregard for the interests of the workingman, who in particular has been left on the wayside of the life of society. Capitalism in this way cripples people and implants in them a jungle morality. All of which

is giving rise to growing resistance among the masses. The revolt against capitalist morality is one of the hallmarks of the Western world today.

One of the congress guests told me that he was surprised to hear ordinary Soviet citizens talk so much about order and discipline. Is order and discipline really so much to their liking?

Evidently this particular guest could not understand why our people value order and discipline, why they are so keenly aware of and react so negatively to cases of absence of proper order in production or in everyday life. But it could not be otherwise. For ours is a society of working men and women and they want order and organization everywhere, from the factory floor to ministries and government departments.

The decisions adopted at the congress have already strengthened our society, and fulfilment of these decisions, acceleration of the country's development, will strengthen it still more. To pursue the course laid down by the 27th Congress is to steadily develop socialism and thus make it stronger and mightier.

This implies at the same time the strengthening of the might of the socialist community, of the entire socialist system. It should be borne in mind that the Soviet Union is the biggest and most powerful socialist country. But realization of this should not make us conceited. On the contrary, it presupposes a growing sense of responsibility, the realization by every Soviet citizen of his duty not only to his own country but to the entire socialist world.

By accelerating its development, socialism will heighten the attractive force of its example. What Lenin said about socialism influencing the outside world mainly by the force of its example is being confirmed again and again.

That this is so was fully proved by the speeches of the foreign guests at the congress.

It has already been pointed out that there were more guests from other countries at this congress than at any previous one, and that they represented a wide range of different political forces. But irrespective of whom they represented they were all unanimous that the strengthening of socialism in our country, the heightening of its prestige was in the interests of all humanity.

This is so, among other things, because the strengthening of socialism signifies simultaneous strengthening of world peace.

At the 27th Congress acceleration of social and economic development and the strengthening of peace, in a sense, merged. It is not a matter of chance that the Party combines these

two concepts in its general line. **Our general line is acceleration of the development of socialism and the simultaneous strengthening of peace.**

In what areas did the congress contribute to the strengthening of peace?

Above all, the congress decisions and their consistent realization will **strengthen the material base of peace.** It has long been clear to all, friends and opponents alike, that the stronger socialism is, the more durable is peace.

The strength of socialism discourages the most aggressive, one may say, irrational quarters in the West from embarking on adventures, raises obstacles to their reckless policy. The strength of socialism instils confidence in the future in the peoples of countries fighting for their independence and sovereignty, countries threatened by forces in the Western world that can conceive of no other approach to international relations than domination of all countries and all peoples.

Needless to say, it is not only a matter of the material base of peace. The 27th Congress notably strengthened the **ideological potential of peace.** In this respect it introduced a new, fresh element. Here too the strategy of acceleration manifested itself.

We have already dwelt on the plan for ensuring universal security put forward at the 27th Congress. Without returning to it in detail, let us single out some aspects which stand out most markedly in the light of comment abroad on our Party forum.

First of all—and this was noted everywhere in the world—the 27th Congress proceeded in all its decisions relating to foreign policy from a **new perception of the world**, or, if you wish, from a **new philosophy of international life.** This philosophy is profoundly realistic and fully accords with the specific features of our turbulent time.

"The highest task of humanity," Lenin said, "is to comprehend the objective logic of economic evolution (the evolution of social life) in its general and fundamental features, so that it may be possible to adapt to it one's social consciousness and the consciousness of the advanced classes ... in as definite, clear and critical a fashion as possible."

It is along these lines that the 27th Congress defined its own philosophy of world affairs.

The political report of the Central Committee fully reflected the growing diversity of the present-day world, the deep-seated contradictions rending it, primarily its division into two social systems adhering to diametrically opposed principles. At the same time, the congress revealed the interdepend-

ence of the modern world united by growing ties in the spheres of production, science, technology, culture, and the mass information media.

This multiformity and unity are the source of many other specific features of the world today. In themselves they dictate the need for a new approach to world affairs, an approach that, taking into account the complexity of the present international community, would make possible its living together, and cooperation among all countries irrespective of their character, so as to resolve the by no means simple problems facing all humanity.

This prime feature of the world today is interlinked with another. The objective logic of the evolution of social life today is in many respects determined by the fact that for the first time in its history humanity has created means of warfare capable of destroying all life on earth. Can this be disregarded? Our congress took all this fully into account. The existence of such means of destruction is perhaps the most convincing argument in favour not of enmity, not of confrontation, but of cooperation.

To learn to live together, to respect one another's interests and in no way to encroach on these interests—this is what the congress urged all governments and peoples to do. Only madmen can fail to understand the logic of its decisions and proposals, the logic not simply of peace, but of human salvation.

Another point. The congress not only proclaimed this logic of salvation, it incorporated it in a definite **political programme** for ensuring universal security. That programme extends to all basic areas of social life—the military, political, economic and humanitarian. More, it offers in each of these areas concrete solutions to the existing problems, solutions that, while not damaging the interests of a single country, ensure all nations a peaceful, tranquil existence.

The programme for universal security has a material foundation. It is contained primarily in the CPSU General Secretary's statement of January 15 this year, which points the way to the solution of the paramount problem, that of eliminating the nuclear threat and, in broader terms, the threat presented by the means of mass destruction created by human genius and used to the detriment of man.

Generally speaking, it may be said that **the 27th Congress will go down in history as the congress that put forward an all-embracing plan for peace.**

But, it may be asked, can peace be planned? After all, international relations are so variegated a combination

of different, essentially contradictory tendencies; it is the sum of mutually exclusive policies. Can anything be planned in so contradictory a world?

Our Party maintains that planning is possible, indeed, imperative. Of course, the peace plan advanced by the congress is not some sort of national plan. In its realization levers applicable to domestic life are ruled out.

Nevertheless, it is in place to speak of planning—planning based on faith in human reason, faith in humanity's intrinsic powers, its instinct of self-preservation.

It is in place to speak about a plan—a plan not designed to depend on the efforts of some nonexistent world government, but pivoted on the rational, conscious action of powerful social and political forces desirous of peace. Such forces exist, they are numerous and prestigious.

Among these forces there are those who share the ideals of socialism and those who regard these ideals as alien, if not dangerous to themselves. But even those who do not accept the new system are guided by reason and seek to take into account the realities of present-day life.

These forces, acting in concert or parallel, can give effect to the plan for peace, ensure the survival of mankind.

Of course, the forces that are hostile to peace and seek social revenge will do their utmost to confuse humanity, to prevent it from taking rational decisions. These forces are already actively at work. But can it be said that they are omnipotent? No. They will never be able to divert us from our chosen course.

The plan for universal peace proposed by our country with a view to its realization by the end of this century accords with the interests of all humanity. It will neither halt nor retard the social and national progress for which many peoples are striving. It is a plan that could enable mankind to live the life it wants to live, without fear of a nuclear holocaust.

We know full well that for this plan to be realized socialism must grow stronger. To strengthen socialism, to accelerate its development is to strengthen peace. All Soviet people know this.

And in this lies the guarantee that the general line of our Party—the line aimed at accelerating our development and strengthening world peace—will be carried into life.

A HISTORIC EVENT



HERBERT MIES
Chairman of the German
Communist Party

The 27th CPSU Congress is of extraordinary and, I would say, historic importance. The political report of the CPSU Central Committee delivered by Mikhail Gorbachev contains a vast programme for the country's accelerated social development and for the safeguarding of peace in the nuclear age. I was greatly impressed by the fact that the congress, drawing upon the experience accumulated by the Party, offers new solutions to current problems in both the country's home and foreign policy. I am convinced that the 27th Congress will give an impulse to new thinking and new action on the part of the international communist and working-class movement. This also applies to us, the members of the German Communist Party, and to the worldwide struggle for peace and security and anti-imperialist solidarity.

The CPSU's policy is characterized by continuity. As one follows the progress of the congress, the aims of the Communists of the Soviet Union become plain. Their policy is clear and predictable. Their foreign policy strategy has the objective of delivering the world from nuclear weapons before the century is out, and establishing a comprehensive international security system. The Soviet Union also seeks to maintain healthy economic, political and cultural relations with the industrialized capitalist countries, the F.R.G. included. The congress opens up interesting new prospects for the broadening of cooperation between our two countries in the interests of European peace and security. The German Communist Party urges the F.R.G. government to comply with five requirements for the achievement of these aims.

First, the F.R.G. government should take a constructive approach to the Soviet Union's comprehensive peace programme and help rid our planet of

weapons of mass destruction before the end of the century.

Second, the F.R.G. government should say No to American "star wars" plans, as this is demanded by the majority of our country's citizens.

Third, the F.R.G. government should contribute towards the implementation of the idea of withdrawing American and Soviet missiles from the European zone. Like it or not, our politicians will have to answer the question of whether they are prepared to part with nuclear weapons, the intermediate-range missiles deployed in the F.R.G.

Fourth, the F.R.G. government should press the U.S. Administration into accepting the U.S.S.R.-proposed moratorium on nuclear tests.

Fifth, the F.R.G. government should make its contribution towards a ban on the manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and support the initiatives advanced by the G.D.R. and Czechoslovakia for the establishment of nuclear-free zones in the centre of Europe. This would help rid the Federal Republic of the weapons of mass destruction now stockpiled on its territory.

I am sure these demands meet the national interests of our country and of all Europeans.

It is the German Communist Party's paramount task today to translate the aspirations and hopes of our people into concrete policy and concrete action. Our country's development has reached a point where pressure should be put on the ruling quarters to change the federal government's policy from one of support for the arms race to taking the first steps along the road to disarmament, from indifference as regards mass unemployment to the provision of more jobs, to the redistribution of Federal Germany's economic and social resources in favour of the working people. We give our policy practical embodiment in our support for the peace movement, i.e., in anti-war action, we give it embodiment in our solidarity with and support for the working-class fight to protect its trade union rights and the living standard it has achieved. We give it embodiment in the unity of action between the Communists and the Social Democrats.

For all the obvious differences of opinion between the Communists and the Social Democrats on political, ideological and philosophical issues, the desire to find points of contact predominates. What has brought the Communists and Social Democrats closer together of late is their common demand for peace, and their common effort to uphold the social gains of the working people. They also have in

common their anti-fascist traditions and their desire to block the way of the neonazis and the revanchist forces. This community of views will be evidenced, for instance, in the fact that Communists and Social Democrats are to take part jointly in the forthcoming Easter peace marches. This community of views clearly manifests itself in the Ruhr where Communists and Social Democrats support the working people's and trade unions' fight in defence of their democratic rights.

OUR AIMS ARE CONCRETE



SAM NUJOMA
President of the South
West Africa People's
Organization (SWAPO)

The forum of the Soviet Communists demonstrates the dynamism of Soviet foreign policy, a bold, innovative and at the same time realistic approach to domestic problems. The political report of the Central Committee of the CPSU delivered at the congress by Mikhail Gorbachev is, in my opinion, an outstanding document of our time. It gives the answers to the paramount issues of the day. It speaks of difficulties and problems with the frankness and directness only a party convinced of its strength and the solid support of the people can afford. It is this that has earned the CPSU the high prestige it enjoys around the world.

The comprehensive peace programme advanced by Mikhail Gorbachev on January 15 was received with deep satisfaction in the African countries. We condemn the irresponsible policy pursued by the United States and its allies. It is a challenge to all mankind and is leading the peoples to the brink of a nuclear conflict. Imperialism alone is to blame for the present tension. Also evident is another thing. As was stressed in the political report of the CPSU Central Committee the fact that the more than \$200 billion pumped out annually from the developing countries is practically

the equivalent of the U.S. military budget is no coincidence. Militarism is doing its utmost to preserve the system of neocolonialist super-exploitation.

That explains Washington's support of Savimbi, the ringleader of the anti-Angolan bands, reactionary scum like the Nicaraguan contras and other hirelings of imperialism that are fighting the progressive governments of Mozambique, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and Kampuchea.

Through the fault of the U.S.A. and South Africa no progress has been made on the question of the independence of Namibia. Pretoria has stepped up its repressions against the population fighting for national liberation, it is flooding Namibia with bands of mercenaries from Western countries and Israel. The situation is further complicated by the fact that a number of states, primarily the U.S., anxious to retain their economic and strategic positions in the south of the continent, are rendering Pretoria military, economic and political aid.

In these circumstances SWAPO has intensified its armed action. Our aims are concrete and clear: to secure an end to the illegal occupation of Namibia by the South African troops and the fulfilment of the Security Council's Resolution No. 435, specifically, the holding of truly free elections, with a view to turning over the power to those chosen by people, and to build a society free of racial discrimination and oppression of any kind.

We are asked: does SWAPO consider armed struggle the only way to secure the lawful rights of the Namibian people? Or can this be done through negotiations with the racists by concluding a cease-fire agreement? We say that theoretically such a possibility does exist, but there can be dialogue only on the basis of Resolution No. 435, and since Pretoria does not agree to that, we have no other alternative but to continue the armed struggle. A decision to impose far-reaching economic sanctions and an oil embargo on the South African racist regime would be a great help to us. Washington's argument that such measures would, supposedly, harm the African population of Namibia and South Africa is nothing but eyewash. Poverty, oppression and ruthless exploitation is the lot of the Africans there. Sanctions would hit not them but the white minority on which the racist regime rests.

I should like to thank the Soviet people for their support of the national liberation struggle in southern Africa and to wish them further success in the building of the most humane and just society on earth.

JUSTICE WILL TRIUMPH



SULEIMAN AL-NADJAB
Political Bureau Member,
Communist Party
of Palestine

It is hard to tell what made the strongest impression on our delegation in the course of the 27th Congress. Perhaps, the Leninist style of this historic communist forum's work. All shortcomings and mistakes were frankly admitted, but this was done in a spirit of business-like optimism.

The documents of the congress, such as the new texts of the Programme and the Rules of the CPSU, the Main Guidelines for the development of the U.S.S.R. in the coming period and, of course, the political report by Mikhail Gorbachev, are most impressive. It is not an exaggeration to say that these documents are of epoch-making significance.

How is world peace to be preserved? Progressive forces and realistically-minded people the world over will find the answer to this question in the political report and the CPSU Programme. For Palestinian Communists the answer is of cardinal importance as the continuous struggle for justice and against occupation and oppression is part of our everyday existence.

The situation in the Israeli-occupied territories has never been peaceful, and this is to be expected. Now we are experiencing an even tougher onslaught by the Israeli occupiers on our people and its patriotic movement. This policy, which has come to be known as "the iron fist," manifests itself in a tightening of the screws all along the line: arrests, imprisonments, deportations and the ruthless repression of those involved in resistance. Encroachments on our Arab Palestinian spiritual and cultural heritage are growing. I refer to incursions by extremist fascist-type bands, and acts perpetrated by the Israeli authorities themselves. The practice of confiscating ancestral Arab lands and setting up new Israeli settlements on them continues.

Against this background attempts are being made, as you know, to solve our

problem for us after the notorious Camp David pattern, which Palestinians reject, and to establish, at Washington's prompting no doubt, a social basis for a capitulationist solution to the problem of our oppressed people. As part of this policy, our national Palestinian institutions are to be replaced by purely formal organizations which have nothing to do with our people's struggle. The Israeli authorities are imposing on us people of their own choosing who supposedly represent the Palestinians of the occupied territories.

As you see, the onslaught is being conducted on many fronts. And we Communists, along with all the patriotic forces of our people, are compelled to fight back on all of them. We are fighting attempts to undermine the prestige of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the only legitimate representative of our people.

The occupied territories are at once the main arena, the stronghold and the centre of the struggle waged by all Palestinians wherever they are domiciled for the restoration of their right to self-determination. In this struggle, unity plays a decisive role. For this reason the Palestinian Communist Party is putting all its energy into unifying the patriotic forces in the occupied territories and thus frustrating the plot to split the PLO and replace its objectives with false solutions which suit imperialism.

As you see, we have our hands full, but the Communist Party has every support from Palestinian patriotic forces. Our party has great influence with the masses, and we are using this influence chiefly to unite all the Palestinians for carrying through the programme set out in the Palestinian National Charter, in the Soviet proposals for a settlement in the Middle East, and in the resolutions of the conference of heads of Arab states in Fez. Our single most important objective is to create an independent Palestinian Arab state of which all those deprived by Zionism of their homeland will be citizens. We are also working at present to consolidate the trade union movement and make it united in upholding the rights of the Palestinian working people.

We believe that justice will certainly triumph. The support we receive from the world's progressive forces, led by the Soviet Union, is a guarantee of this.

The congress guests were interviewed by D. ZGERSKY, N. ZHOLKVER and N. RESHETNYAK

GUS HALL: AMERICANS WANT CHANGES



Below is a slightly abridged transcript of a press conference held by the General Secretary of the Communist Party, U.S.A., at the press centre of the 27th Congress of the CPSU on March 4 immediately after his meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev.

Opening the press conference, Gus Hall noted that there is more to the 27th Congress than meets the eye. The congress adopted important decisions in domestic policy, and especially in foreign policy. New fundamental assessments and judgements of the main trends of world development were made, and a concrete plan of actions was put forward. The congress drew very important conclusions revealing the interconnection between the world-wide processes and the buildup of nuclear armaments.

It is these fundamental conceptions that are the basis of the proposals the Soviet Union has been making during the past 15 years. In this sense there is a great difference between those concepts and the basic concepts that the Reagan Administration operates under. For instance, on the question of ending nuclear tests. It has become the basic test for everybody. Because if you are for ending the nuclear arms race you are for ending the tests, and if you are against ending the tests you are not for ending the nuclear arms race.

The Soviet proposals come from the basis that human society must find a way to put an end to the nuclear arms race. The Reagan Administration operates under the philosophical basis that the United States must build nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union, and therefore it is not for ending the nuclear tests. There is a basic difference here. One of the things that Comrade Gorbachev emphasized to me when I told him I was going to be at this press conference was that he would like me especially to convince the people of the press and the people of the world that the Soviet Union is dead serious about the concept of putting an end to the nuclear arms race and eliminating all nuclear weapons within 15 years. The Pentagon should not take this as a sign of weakness. These proposals come from the understanding of the

dangers to the world in this nuclear age.

Question: How would you estimate the recent developments in American-Soviet relations and, particularly, the impact of this congress on the U.S., its domestic and foreign policy?

Answer: It is not always easy to understand the developments in another country. In American-Soviet relations there is an event — the summit conference — which had most likely the biggest effect on the world. The people in our country are eagerly waiting for, and there is great support for, an improvement in the political climate between the Soviet Union and the United States. The voting in Congress for a resolution calling for an end to nuclear tests and for responding to the Soviet moratorium reflects this change of attitude of the great majority of American people, a deeper understanding of Soviet foreign policy initiatives. That could not have happened before the summit. Recent opinion polls show that only 22 per cent of the Americans support an increase in the arms budget. This also reflects the change of attitude of the American people to the arms race and disarmament. I would say those who are for the nuclear arms race — the Pentagon and so on — fear the new relationship and the normalization of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. What they fear most is a change in the political climate. Henry Kissinger recently wrote quite openly: "How can you continue to get big military budgets and prepare for war if the climate is for peace?" And that, I think, was the biggest effect the summit had in this change of climate in the United States.

Question: If you were an opposition political leader here in the Soviet Union, you would not have the opportunity to speak out in the same way as you are able in the United States. In fact, you would face punishment and

perhaps even imprisonment for expressing those views. Could we have your thoughts on this, please?

Answer: Let me say that I not only faced the possibility of prison, but I spent eight years in prison in the United States for the specific charge of thinking. They did not specify what thoughts, but of course we knew what thoughts they were. Well, you want comparisons, so let me give you some. For instance, about running for the presidency of the United States. I can run for the presidency, but I cannot be elected because there are restrictions and I cannot get on the ballot in more than 25 states, and that is not enough to be elected president. That is a very important question when you make comparisons. Our democracy is not as democratic as most want it to be.

Let me say about the 27th Congress. I have never been at any kind of a meeting, any kind of a congress in the United States or any place where there has been such an honest, open, fundamental, critical examination of every phase of life in the country. This congress, I think, showed the greatest of the democratic structure of Soviet society. There is no country in the world where more people are involved in the decision-making process than in the Soviet Union. I mean the decision-making process, because the Soviet political system has a proper mechanism for this purpose. That is the direction Soviet democracy is developing. I worked in steel mills and know there is nothing a steelworker can say about what happens in the steel mills in the United States or any capitalist country, while under socialism, in the Soviet Union, a steelworker has everything to say about what happens in the steel mills.

Let us compare trade union movements in our country and the Soviet Union. Our trade unions have some economic power, whereas the Soviet trade unions, besides economic, have political power. In this respect they have considerably more rights, and this cannot be denied.

Question: What could you say about the 27th Congress from the ideological point of view, from the point of view of developing the Marxist-Leninist theory?

Answer: As I said in the beginning, some fundamental questions were discussed at the congress, and a profound analysis of a number of problems was made. Some of them are going into new theoretical concepts which add to the science of Marxism-Leninism. I would like to call on you to study not only the report, but also the discussion, because underneath the discussion about immediate questions and problems there are some new ideas, including even philosophical ideas. And, therefore, to

understand the world and what the Soviet leadership is doing and the direction they are going, you should really study this material.

Question: Would you please tell us about the influence of the arms race on social programmes in the United States?

Answer: A few years ago our party, myself included, used to say that the size of the federal budget deficit does not really matter. But two years ago we changed our opinion and began to say that it does matter. The debt has become so big that it affects the economy, economic problems and the exchange rate of the dollar.

You know that Ronald Reagan was elected first time because he had promised to balance the budget and therefore get rid of the deficit. However, he has doubled the deficit, and it keeps growing at billions of dollars a year. The trade unions began to see the connection between big war budgets and the cuts in social programmes. We have many new things in the United States that the world still does not want to believe. The world does not want to believe that 33 million Americans are living below the poverty level. The world does not want to believe that we have five million homeless and hungry. In a city like New York 20,000 children are homeless and hungry. The housing programme has totally stopped under the Reagan Administration, because the money goes into the military budget. The President promises not to cut the social security programme, but he is cutting it through the back door. Big war budgets are having a serious effect on the economic condition of the people in the United States. The real wages of workers have now been declining for ten years, and there has also been a steady decline in their living standards.

Question: To what extent does the Soviet standard of living lag behind the American and do you really think that Soviet technology can catch up with America's in this century? You no doubt studied the economies of both countries.

Answer: I think when you compare the standards of living, it is most important to put the question in the proper historical framework.

You have to say first of all that capitalism has been building in the United States under the most favourable conditions for 200 years and that socialism has been building for 68 years now. Socialism came into a country which was not developed industrially as the United States was. Then, the Soviet Union went through two devastating wars. No one has yet written what devastation the second world war

brought to the Soviet Union. One should write a full story about that, because it is just unbelievable what the devastation was. In spite of all the boycotts and sanctions imposed by the capitalist world, the Soviet Union has been building and building. I think that the standard of living in the Soviet Union has now more or less caught up with that of the United States. When you talk about the standard of living, you cannot leave out the 33 million Americans living below the poverty level. You cannot leave out the five million who are homeless and hungry. You cannot leave out the standard of living of the elderly, senior citizens. That all has to be included in the overall analysis of the situation, and the standard of living should therefore be compared with that of the country where there is no unemployment and life has been gradually improving. This growth will be boosted by the new plan of doubling the present level in 15 years.

Question: Did Mr Gorbachev indicate to you when the Soviet Union would like to hold the next summit with President Reagan? Did he talk to you about the question of scheduling the summit in terms of progress at the Geneva arms talks?

Answer: Yes, we spent quite a bit of time on that subject, and it is very much in Comrade Gorbachev's mind, especially the question of whether a summit should take place if there is no progress on anything. I would say generally he is very much for a summit. But he is bothered by the fact that the Reagan Administration in practical terms moves in the opposite direction. For instance, President Reagan's budget proposals the other day obviously move in the opposite direction. He says that the Soviet Union should be made to negotiate and that nuclear arms should be banished. But he continues to build up nuclear arms. That, of course, raises some questions about the benefits of the summit.

I have the feeling that the Soviets have not given up on it and will continue to push in that direction. In my brief speech at the congress a few days ago I said the American people would welcome Comrade Gorbachev in the United States. "Do you suggest," Comrade Gorbachev asked me, "that I come to your country without conditions?" I replied: "Without conditions." I expressed the same thought today. A summit will have some benefits even if it does not immediately lead to a reduction of the arms race. It improves the climate and moves in that direction. It is of course important, I told Comrade Gorbachev, how other world leaders will behave. I suggested that one of the places he should appear and deliv-

er an important speech on basic problems is a joint session of Congress. I think this will make quite an impression.

Question: The Communist Party of the United States is now able to campaign openly. Why, you think, your party has not made more headway than it has? If you are confident that communism is going to come to the United States some day, how is this going to happen: by a democratic process or by a revolutionary process?

Answer: Our party is a minority party. But it is very active. Our party continues to grow, and its influence grows too. I am very optimistic about our Party's future. Sometimes I am asked what our party has that other parties do not. I say: one of the most fundamental things that our party has and other parties do not have is our future. I am sure that socialism is the way of the future for the world and for the United States. If you look at the world, you will see three kinds of countries in it: old capitalist countries like the United States, Britain, France and so on; socialist countries—the Soviet Union, Cuba, China, Czechoslovakia and others; the other countries, which in one way or another are moving towards socialism. I know there will be no new capitalist countries. That system has lived its day out.

I think it was Karl Marx who said that the United States is one of the countries that may have a peaceful, democratic revolution. Our party's position is that such a revolution is possible, and we are working for that. One of the ways to make it possible is to democratize our electoral system, for instance, so that a Communist could win an election to become president of the United States. I repeat: we are working in that direction. But we cannot guarantee the development of a peaceful democratic process if the ruling class decides to resist violently. In other words, we could achieve socialism by peaceful means, but we cannot guarantee that.

Question: How does the American public react to the power politics of the Reagan Administration, its policy of sabotaging a practical solution of urgent problems connected with arms reduction and nuclear disarmament? What role does the Communist Party play in organizing the peace movement in your country, and in what measure can the American people's opposition to this policy influence the conduct of the Reagan Administration?

Answer: It is a kind of unique situation even for our country. There is a strong opposition to most of Reagan's policies. But the people separate these policies from Reagan. That is a result of image building. It is a very impor-

tant factor. Reagan is a competent actor. Therefore you have a problem: Reagan still gets support when his policies do not. But this does not come against him personally, because he is a good actor. For instance, two weeks ago President Reagan addressed the trade unions and the nation. He split his State of the Union message into two parts. On the first day he spoke at a joint session of Congress. His speech was full of flowery phrases, and its theme was that he is the defender of the family budget. In the second part of the speech he defended the military budget. The purpose was probably to strengthen the image of Reagan and to separate it from unpopular programmes.

The next morning the budget was presented and therefore separated from Reagan again. It provided for drastic cuts in the family budget, but people did not associate it with the Reagan image, though it was the Reagan budget.

Now the second part of the question, regarding the peace movement. The peace movement is growing in the United States, and expectations are taking the form of protest. The movement is exerting a certain influence. Congress would have never voted for the moratorium resolution without real pressure from the peace forces. Our party works with the peace forces, and it has an influence on many questions.

For many years our party was the only organization that rejected the idea of "a plague on both your houses," that is, that both countries are equally responsible for the arms race. After the summit the situation changed. Almost everybody now sees that you cannot say "a plague on both your houses" when one house makes bold proposals for peace and declares a unilateral moratorium on all nuclear tests whereas the other one does not reciprocate.

Question: One of the aims of the arms race launched by the United States is to break the economic backbone of the Soviet Union. Can it be said that the U.S. has now broken its own economic backbone?

Answer: A couple of weeks ago I read a speech by the president of the machinists' union, which is one of the big unions in the United States. He said there are people in the United States who think they will force the Soviet Union into an economic bankruptcy as a result of the arms race. There is no question that the arms race has adverse effects both for the United States and the Soviet Union. However, its econom-

ic consequences are much more serious for the United States than they are for the Soviet Union. And that is one of the reasons we should put an end to it. The arms race is wasted money on both sides.

Question: What is the situation in the American trade unions today? What new trends have appeared? What stand has the leadership of the U.S. trade unions taken on issues of war and peace and what is their attitude to President Reagan's policies? Why has the number of trade unions reduced in the United States?

Answer: Some big things have happened in the American trade union movement. For a number of years there has been a process in the movement, mainly among the rank and file and in the middle layer of leadership in the trade unions. The AFL-CIO recently held its annual convention, which was the most progressive in the history of this organization. The convention took positions that the leadership has never taken. For instance, on foreign policy. Twenty-seven trade unions of the United States and Canada drew up a resolution on Central America that placed full responsibility for the aggression on the Reagan Administration. With some small changes the convention finally passed that resolution, that is, the AFL-CIO adopted a position in foreign policy against the Reagan Administration. The trade unions took a firm position on the question of struggle against racism. For the first time they criticized the military budget, which they always supported in the past.

The convention took good positions on all domestic questions: on inflation, on taxes. It took a strong anti-monopoly position, against the big corporations. All down the line, it was a historic convention in a sense. It reflected what has been going on in the last two or three years. This is a reflection of the fact that the Reagan Administration has taken an anti-labour position. The unions had to make economic concessions and finally came to a point where they stood up to fight against it. We consider this a very important development for the United States. That change in the trade union movement will affect the entire labour movement in the United States.

Question: There are people in the Soviet Union who are not allowed to emigrate to reunite with their families in the West. There are also people who believe they are in prison simply for thinking. Could you tell me what is your policy on these issues, and if your party took power in the United States, what that policy would be?

Answer: When we take power, not if, we will have our policy based on the traditions and historic experience of our country. As for the prisoners you are talking about, they have violated laws, and whether you agree with those laws or not, they are violations of legislation. Of course, there can be injustices. As a matter of fact, some of the discussions at the 27th Congress revealed the injustices that should be corrected.

Question: During the past four years the U.S. authorities have denied entry visas to members of Soviet trade union delegations. The last case of this order took place in November 1985. The All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions then made a protest on this occasion. How do the American workers and trade union activists react to such facts, which hinder the establishment and promotion of contacts between Soviet and American trade unions?

Answer: It is an old practice, going on for years. Dozens of trade union delegations have applied for visas and have been denied them. When Soviet trade union delegations agree to come to the United States, our trade unions arrange meetings for them and gatherings. But the visas are usually denied a day or two before they are supposed to leave, and this disrupts all the preparations and activities. One Soviet delegation was denied visas already after the summit. In the meantime, President Reagan makes speeches about the importance of meetings at various levels.

How do workers react? Generally, they say: "What are they afraid of? What is the State Department afraid of to show Soviet trade unionists about America?"

Obviously, what they are afraid of is that friendly ties will be established between the workers of our countries.

PROBING THE SECRETS OF HALLEY'S COMET

The Soviet probes Veba-1 and Veba-2 have carried out the first close-range study of Halley's comet.

The multipurpose programme of this mission, drawn up on the initiative of Soviet scientists, provided for the study of Venus and Halley's comet. The requisite equipment was developed by Soviet experts in conjunction with their colleagues in Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, the G.D.R., Poland, France, the F.R.G. and Czechoslovakia.

The probes were launched in December 1984. At the first stage of the flight in June 1985, Veba-1 and Veba-2 studied Venus by means of descent modules and aerostat probes. Subsequently, having executed a manoeuvre in Venus' gravitational field, the transit modules went into a trajectory intended to bring them close to Halley's comet.

More than a billion kilometres after lift-off, Veba-1 approached the comet closely enough to take its measurements as planned by the scientists. On March 4, when the probe was 171 million kilometres from the earth and 14 million kilometres from Halley's comet, Veba-1 sent back the first TV pictures. It continued to photograph and investigate the comet on March 5 from a distance of seven million kilometres. On March 7

and 8 similar investigations were carried out by Veba-2.

Finally came the day scientists the world over had long awaited. On March 6, Veba-1 penetrated the gas and dust shield of Halley's comet at a distance of 9,000 km from its nucleus and carried out a comprehensive scientific examination of the celestial body. Three days later, on March 9, Veba-2 also encountered the comet at a distance of 8,200 km from its nucleus.

As Veba-1 and Veba-2 passed close to the comet's nucleus at a relative speed of about 80 km a second, they were able to take its measurements and photograph it from various angles for three hours at a stretch. The spacecraft afforded scientists an insight, through the instruments' "eyes," into the hitherto secret world of Halley's comet. Close-up pictures of the nucleus were obtained by means of TV cameras mounted on an automatic stabilized platform. Thousands of colour television pictures of the comet and its nucleus, taken through various light filters, were transmitted back to earth.

By means of the probes scientists not only saw what the comet looked like at close range, but also measured its temperature and other physical and chemical characteristics, analyzed the chemical composition of the gas and dust components of its substance, studied its electromagnetic fields and the physical processes taking place in its shield.

The spacecraft lifted the veil of mystery from Halley's comet but at the

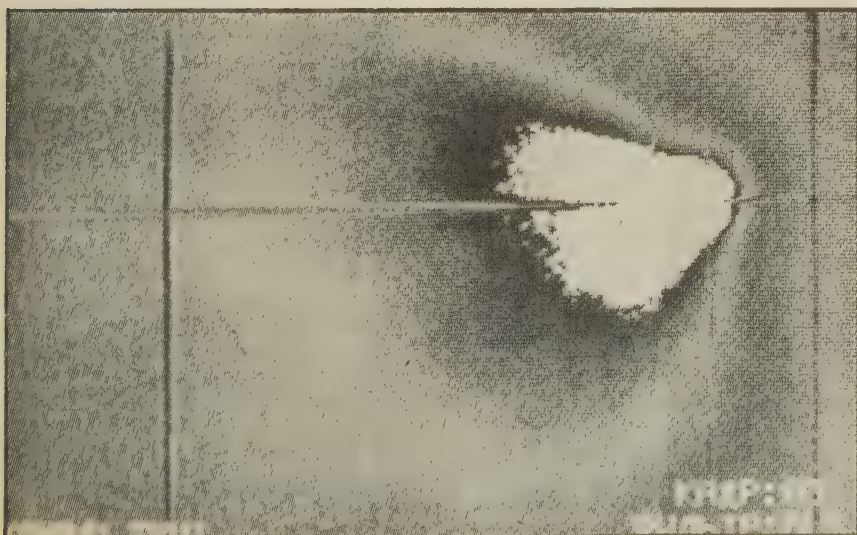
same time they presented science with new riddles. The information sent back by Veba-1 and Veba-2 is now being processed and analyzed at the Space Research Institute and other institutes attached to the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, and at the research centres of countries taking part in the international project "Venus—Halley's Comet." It is already safe to claim, however, that the project has been a spectacular success, and has contributed greatly to our knowledge of the solar system, and to world scientific progress in general.

The appearance of a bright comet in the sky is always an important event in astronomy. The passing of Halley's comet is an event of double significance: the comet is well known (it was first mentioned in a chronicle dating from 240 B.C.) and is a touchstone for astronomical theories. During its recurrent approaches to the sun (every 76 years, on average) it gives rise to new ideas which augment our knowledge of the Universe.

Comets are among the smaller bodies in the solar system. Before the advent of the space age they were the least studied of celestial objects, although several new ones are discovered every year. This is due to the fact that new comets appear unexpectedly, emit a weak glow, have extremely small nuclei and, moreover, are obscured by a gas and dust shield caused by solar radiation.

There was a time when the appearance of comets was regarded as an evil omen which supposedly presaged wars, famine and natural disasters. With the advance of astronomy, scientists have proved that the comets and their periodic recurrence are a natural phenomenon which has no effect whatever on human destinies. Today scientists hope to find in comets information which may provide a key to the mystery of the origin of the solar system. According to the latest theories, comets are lumps of matter hurled beyond the limits of a planetary system as a result of gravitational force when the giant planets were in their formative stages. Consequently, it is possible that comets consist of protoplanetary substances that have been preserved. If this is so, the information obtained by space probes will help scientists trace back the evolution of planets and find out how life began on earth.

G. RYABOV



Halley's comet photographed by the space probe Veba-2 when closest to the comet.

TASS photo

F.R.G.

GOVERNMENT AGAINST THE WORKERS

At noon on March 6 conveyors at factories all over the country came to a halt. At the call of the Federation of German Trade Unions, meetings of protest against the government's bill sharply restricting the workers' right to strike began.

The unions' choice of March 6 for the mass actions was deliberate: on that day three years ago the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Christian Social Union (CSU) and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) won the majority in the general election and formed a coalition government. A great many factory and office workers, believing the promises of "economic recovery" and reduction in unemployment, voted for these parties at the time.

Now the mood in the country has changed. The working people feel they have been deceived: despite the generally favourable economic situation, there are still 2.6 million unemployed, considerably more than in March 1983. In all the class conflicts the cabinet invariably sides with the employers. Government appropriations for social needs have been drastically cut, and a number of anti-labour laws passed. The new bill, recently submitted to the Bundestag, will deprive the wage earners of their main weapon in the fight for their interests—the right to strike. As Ernst Breit, chairman of the Federation of German Trade Unions, pointed out, "the employers will be able simply to dismiss all trade union demands that do not suit them, while the unions will have no chance of gaining at least a compromise solution."

Notwithstanding the massive protest, the government intends to stand its ground. At a press conference on March 6, demonstratively appointed for 1 p.m., the hour the meetings began in 150 cities, Chancellor Helmut Kohl announced that the government would not yield to the pressure of the "street" and the bill would basically remain unchanged.

However, this show of firmness cannot altogether hide the government's

uneasiness and uncertainty. It has clearly underestimated the strength of the working people's resistance. The attempt to split the trade unions did not succeed. The obedient media tried to present the Metalworkers' Union as the "troublemakers," but among the marchers who filled the streets of cities on March 6 were railway workers, printers, builders, miners, office workers, teachers and even members of the Policemen's Union. Altogether, more than a million took part in the demonstrations, although the employers had threatened to fine all who downed tools and the courts ruled that the strike was "illegal."

In parliament the trade unions' demands are supported by the Social Democrats and the Greens. Dr Hans-Jochen Vogel, chairman of the Social Democratic Party in the Bundestag, declared that if his party comes to power next year it will repeal the law.

There is widespread dissatisfaction with the government also among the rank-and-file members and supporters

of the CDU. Speaking at a meeting in Hildesheim, Gustav Fehrenbach, vice-chairman of the Federation of German Trade Unions, himself a member of the CDU, reminded his party's leaders of the deplorable results of the local elections in Schleswig-Holstein earlier this month. The CDU lost 6 per cent of the vote, and the Free Democrats, its partner in the ruling coalition, 2.4 per cent. It is the unanimous opinion of observers that the central leadership, not the local organizations, was largely to blame for this setback.

On March 21, when the bill will have its third reading in the Bundestag, the trade unions plan new protest actions, this time in Bonn. They propose to continue the struggle also if the ruling majority approves the bill. And this will unquestionably affect the outcome of the parliamentary elections in January 1987. The weekly *Die Zeit* goes so far as to say that, politically speaking, Kohl has already lost the fight over the new bill by spoiling relations with the unions for a long time to come.

Our Own Correspondent

Bonn

U.S.A.—NICARAGUA

THE HUNDRED- MILLION-DOLLAR QUESTION

A noisy anti-Nicaraguan campaign, with the President, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defence taking part, has been gaining momentum in the United States since the beginning of March. Three leaders of the Nicaraguan contras—Adolfo Calero, Arturo Cruz and Alfonso Robelo—were summoned to Washington where they were warmly received by the White House incumbent himself.

What is it all about? Reagan is asking Congress for \$100 million for the contras, \$70 million of it for military purposes. And this despite the fact that the leaders of virtually all the countries of the Western Hemisphere are opposed to aid for the contras. This was brought home also to the White House special emissary Harry Shlaudeman during his recent tour of South America. In these circumstances new devices for pressuring Congress are now being

resorted to. First, assurances are given of readiness to hold out an olive branch to Nicaragua with a view to the resumption of the bilateral talks broken off by Washington. But this is hedged in with the unacceptable demand that Nicaragua enter into dialogue with the counterrevolutionaries. Then follows the dramatic warning that the contras' defeat "would mean a second Cuba on the mainland of Northern America. It would be a major defeat in the quest for democracy... consolidation of a sanctuary for terrorists" and "the possibility of Soviet military bases on America's doorstep."

Reagan said as much in so many words. But if the contras were given another \$100 million that would "give the Sandinistas an incentive to negotiate seriously." And moreover, an incentive to observe "human rights." This thesis is elaborated on the basis of the "similarity" of the recent events in Haiti and the Philippines to what is happening around Nicaragua. Misrepresenting the essence of these events and its own role in both places, the U.S. Administration avers that the sole objective of the United States is to help the forces fighting for democracy.

All this is surely a typical instance of turning things on their heads. Indeed, what incentive to "serious negotiations" can be given by building up tension which is bound to grow if the contras get more millions of dollars and more up-to-date weapons? And what has the overthrow of tyranny in Haiti to do with the developments in Nicaragua, where Washington's mercenaries are waging undeclared war on a lawfully elected democratic government and openly trying to topple it?

Anxious at all costs to wring from Congress the appropriations for the Nicaraguan contras, Reagan has let it be understood that if the funds are not forthcoming a direct U.S. invasion of Nicaragua would finally have to be undertaken. And White House spokesman Patrick J. Buchanan put it quite plainly when he spoke of the U.S. having to send the Marines.

It is expected that the voting in both chambers of Congress on the question of aid to the contras will take place in the third week of March. According to reports from Washington, prominent Republicans have warned the White

the 33 Congressmen who do not approve of granting military aid to the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries.

Will the resistance of the Congressmen, who have to reckon with growing

protests of the American public against Washington's policy in Nicaragua, be broken? Or will both sides try to find some compromise?

A. BARYSHEV

U.S.A.—UNITED NATIONS

THE REAL REASON

In an unprecedented move, the U.S. Administration, on the far-fetched pretext of "a threat to national security," has ordered the U.S.S.R., the Ukrainian and Byelorussian republics to reduce the diplomatic personnel of their United Nations missions by 40 per cent by April 1, 1988.

As is pointed out in U.N. Secretariat circles, the provocative character of this White House action is plain, particularly to anyone acquainted with the legal enactments governing the status of missions to the U.N.—the 1946 general convention on privileges and immunities, the 1947 agreement between the U.N. and the United States government on United Nations headquarters, and the report of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (1947). "None of these agreements," the New York Times said, "put a specific limitation on the size of a mission to the United Nations."

Why did Washington make this demarche only a few months after the United Nations had marked its fortieth anniversary?

It is common knowledge that the U.S.S.R. approaches the activity of this organization with a sense of responsibility, constantly works on new proposals for resolving complex international issues, for creating a healthier climate in the world, and upholds its ideas at sessions and in the committees of the U.N. Many of the positive achievements of the world organization over the years are directly due to these efforts.

The attitude to the U.N. of the successive U.S. administrations has been quite different. The negativist position which the United States, with a consistency worthy of a better cause, has adopted was manifested at the last General Assembly session when the U.S. delegation came out in opposition to the entire world community on some of the most vital issues. This approach, and not some Soviet "intrigues," is what is causing the growing isolation of the

U.S. in various U.N. agencies where it is finding steadily diminishing support for its aggressive stance.

From the rostrum of the 27th CPSU Congress Mikhail Gorbachev set forth the Soviet view on the basic principles of the system of international security. Together with the Soviet proposals to rid the world of the threat of a nuclear catastrophe by the beginning of the next century, these principles will undoubtedly become the focus of the general political debate and the work of the relevant committees at the next session of the U.N. General Assembly.

It is this peace offensive of Soviet foreign policy and the increasing importance the Soviet leadership attaches to the work of the U.S.S.R. within the U.N. framework in accordance with its statutory principles that are the real reason for the action taken by the Reagan Administration against the missions of the Soviet republics.

Apart from the obvious desire to get the emphasis in U.N. activity shifted in a way that would suit Washington, the provocative character of the U.S. move has made itself felt in American-Soviet relations as well. In the action of the White House it is difficult to detect any sign of that spirit of Geneva on which the American President has latterly been dilating.

It is not fortuitous that in an interview with the New York Times chief diplomatic correspondent Bernard Gwertzman, a State Department spokesman, admitted that the timing of the ultimatum on reducing the staffs of the missions was rather strange now that the second summit meeting is in the process of being arranged.

It is indeed strange, if viewed out of the context of the realities of U.S. politics as a whole. But not at all inexplicable from the standpoint of the interests of the military-industrial complex and of the conservatives among the President's closest associates. For them there is no suitable time for détente. And anything that could heighten the atmosphere of suspicion and tension in the world is always timely.

A. ARKHIPOV

Our Own Correspondent

New York



Contras setting out on an operation.

TASS photo

House that its plan will come up against difficulties in Congress. A group of 18 Senators, Republicans and Democrats, have already sent a message to the President urging him to refrain from pressing his demands. To date, the legislators have in one form or another turned down the Administration's request on five different occasions.

However, Reagan, laying aside urgent affairs of state, has started lobbying Congressmen on his own. The national conservative political action committee, close to the White House, has allocated \$1.5 million for the campaign against

THE ANTONOV AFFAIR

BEFORE THE FINALE

"Sergei Antonov is altogether innocent. But even if this will be the judgement of the court, it cannot heal the wounds inflicted upon him." This statement by Giuseppe Consolo, defence counsel for the Bulgarian citizen falsely accused, with two of his compatriots, of "complicity in the conspiracy to assassinate" Pope John Paul II in May 1981, sums up, as it were, the three years' ordeal of this victim of a travesty of justice and political provocation.

More than nine months of a largely biased trial, nearly 40 months of physical and moral torment in custody—this has been the lot forced upon Sergei Antonov. It offers eloquent testimony to the illusoriness of those much vaunted "human rights" in the West, which are propounded by the devotees of Western-style democracy and civil liberties. The liberty, the health, the personal happiness of an honest man and the peace of mind of his near ones have been sacrificed to unsavoury political machinations. The "Antonov

case" will always be remembered as a glaring instance of political provocation.

The legal proceedings instituted with the avowed object of finding the accomplices of the real criminal, the terrorist Agca who shot and wounded Pope John Paul II, were deliberately diverted from this purpose by behind-the-scenes forces and served objectively as an instrument of a large-scale political provocation directed against the socialist countries, against détente in Europe.

For nine whole months certain quarters tried hard to "prove" by hook or by crook the patently false version that the Bulgarians were involved in the assassination attempt. This prevented the court from objectively exposing Agca's actual accomplices, for in all probability he did not act alone.

The groundlessness of the charges against the Bulgarian citizens was fully revealed in the course of the trial. The testimony of the sole "witness for the prosecution," Agca, was illogical, highly implausible, and ran counter to the established facts, the documentary evidence and the testimony of other witnesses. Agca changed his testimony dozens of times, confessed to having lied and proceeded to tell more lies, evaded any explanation of the inconsistencies in his own testimony. All of which made it incumbent on the court to dismiss the case and rehabilitate the Bulgarian defendants. But this was not done.

At the same time, the Italian judiciary were subjected to unprecedented ideological and political pressure from the reaction, both domestic and foreign. As impartial legal experts have noted, the norms of legal procedure and

regulations governing criminal investigations usually adhered to in Italy were repeatedly violated. An anti-Bulgarian, anti-socialist campaign was unleashed in connection with the attempt on the life of the Pope and the trial itself. A sinister role in fabricating the slanderous "Bulgarian connection" was played by the special services of the U.S. and some West European countries, with the help of professional informers on their payroll.

But all the efforts of the inventors of the "Bulgarian connection," all the attempts to break Antonov failed. The case for the prosecution collapsed when it finally had to recognize that the whole of Agca's testimony had been a figment of his imagination. Prosecuting attorney Marini, notwithstanding his reluctance to take an objective view of the case, was forced to admit that there was no proof whatever of Bulgarian complicity in the crime, to drop the charges against Antonov and the other Bulgarians and recommend the court to release them "for lack of evidence."

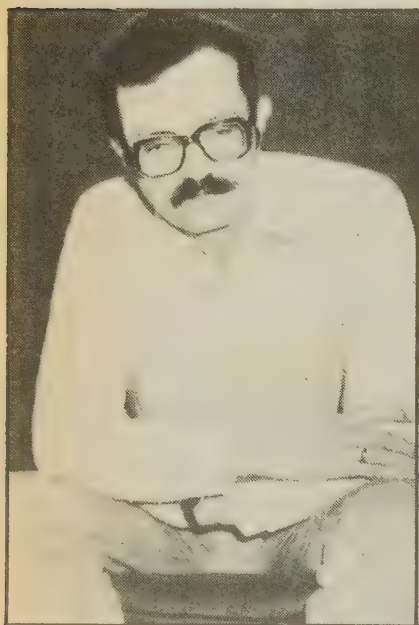
This futile attempt to cast if only a shadow of doubt on the innocence of the Bulgarians is clearly doomed to share the fate of the slanderous accusations against them made by the terrorist and provocateur Agca.

However, under Italian law the final verdict has to be handed down by the jury and the judges. In a few days they will do so. Let us hope that their sense of justice and impartiality will prevail, and they will not allow themselves to be influenced by the anti-communist, anti-socialist propaganda that for many months has been depicting the horrors of "communist-controlled international terrorism" and going out of its way to "prove the complicity" of the Bulgarian citizens in the crime on St. Peter's Square. Let them at long last give Sergei Antonov back his freedom!

E. KOVALYOV

Sergei Antonov: framed.

Photo from L'Espresso (Italy)



U.S.A.—SOUTH AFRICA

APARTHEID "MISUNDERSTOOD"

The question of regional conflicts has featured prominently in American propaganda lately, with the conspicuous omission, however, of any mention of South Africa: a trouble spot that does not fit into Washington's

pattern of "communist-inspired" conflicts.

Even under close examination, statements by White House spokesmen are found to contain only faintly discernible references to the South African crisis, which they present as being basically a question of the Cuban military presence in Angola. No mention is made of apartheid or South Africa's constant attacks on her neighbours, of the thousands of murdered Africans, the

billions of dollars' worth of damage inflicted by South Africa on the states along its borders or the famine and stark poverty suffered by the victims of its oppression. Any mention of these is regarded as being in poor taste. The reasons are clear: after all, every aspect of the tragedy of South Africa bears the imprint of direct or indirect interference on the part of the United States.

The policy of "constructive engagement" with South Africa which the Reagan Administration increasingly pursues, even in the face of protest from the American public itself, brings more suffering to Africans and aggravates the crisis. It was no fortuity that fresh flare-ups of South Africa's aggressiveness in the region (a new invasion of Angola, the blockade of Lesotho, the blackmailing of Botswana and Zimbabwe, the incitement of Pretoria-backed bandits in Angola and Mozambique to more vigorous action) coincided with the peaking of Washington's neoglobalist demagoguery. Nor was it a fortuity that the U.S. declared its intention to resume military aid to UNITA terrorists and their leader Savimbi was received in the White House as a head of state precisely in this period. Or that, following Savimbi's visit and the U.S.-South African high-level meeting, Pretoria is again trying to legitimize the puppet regime in Namibia.

Using the smoke screen of anti-communism, the U.S. is trying to cover up Pretoria's crimes and camouflage the preparation of fresh provocation against independent African countries, in particular Angola. Open support for Savimbi is more than just interference in Angola's internal affairs; it is a new stage in the onslaught on national liberation movements and the freedom and independence of African states which it is conducting in close collaboration with Pretoria.

The propaganda concomitant of this onslaught consists not only of demagogic calls to set up "a united front" against communism, overthrow objectionable governments and increase military aid to various bandit formations. The situation in countries which are targets for subversion is either hushed up or deliberately distorted.

The U.S. mass media give less and less space to reports on South Africa. News items are often relegated to inside pages, and television companies refuse to show "banal" scenes of funeral processions being spattered with bullets. It is said that violence in South Africa is subsiding, the unrest is on

the wane, the Botha government is planning radical reforms, the rand is going up and the major banks are thinking of lifting the restrictions imposed on South Africa. The emphasis has been shifted to "bloody tribal clashes" and "irreconcilable contradictions among blacks," while brutalities by the authorities and the practices of apartheid are being pushed into the background.

The intention behind all this is clear. It is not the number of newspaper ac-

by and large been "misunderstood." It is not Botha who keeps Nelson Mandela, the leader of the liberation struggle, behind bars, but the ANC and the Communists who want "to keep him in jail as a martyr figure." According to Botha, "in terms of numbers" the ANC represents just "a few thousand." The paper likened Botha to Charles de Gaulle, hinting at "the historic mission" imposed on him. The implication is (as



South African police bludgeoning peaceful marchers.

Photo from Der Spiegel (F.R.G.)

counts that matters but their content and slant. For instance, the Savimbi visit to the U.S. eclipsed all other reports on the subject of southern Africa. The intention was to suggest to the man in the street that Savimbi is a man to be respected as the protector of the West's interests. It is no accident that Savimbi, along with the Nicaraguan contras, has come to be styled "a freedom fighter." Simultaneously, attempts are made to discredit the national liberation movement and the fight against apartheid.

The American mass media readily give Pretoria every opportunity to put its case. On March 5, the Washington Times carried a lengthy interview with President Botha, who "explained" the key problems of South Africa to the American public in the following way: apartheid as most people see it has long been nonexistent; apartheid has

in the case of Savimbi) that anti-communist fighters must be helped; apartheid may indeed be offensive, but the end justifies the means.

In his State of the Union message on February 26 and his White House speech on March 7 Reagan again threatened to put an end to the long list of governments falling under communist control, and step up the fight against "enemies of democracy," "terrorists" and "international communists." Such threats are becoming increasingly vehement, leaving one with the impression that propaganda "broad-sides" will at any moment be followed by actual shooting. Washington intends, by its neoglobalist approach to regional conflicts, its instigation of counterrevolutionary revolts and policy of fomenting new hotbeds of confrontation in "old" conflict zones, to undermine efforts to ease world tensions. This is its answer to the Soviet Union's policy of peace.

B. ASOYAN

IN THE LAND OF NOD

The trial of 474 mafiosi began in the Sicilian capital of Palermo on February 10 with a 8,607-page indictment plus 22 volumes of depositions and confessions. The courtroom itself is in a specially built 56,000,000-lire bunker next door to Palermo prison capable of withstanding both a frontal assault and long-term siege. It is expected that the trial will take anywhere from 6 to 8 months and each day the mafiosi on trial will be caged for their own safety.

Not all the cages are occupied, however, as a hundred-odd mafiosi are on the run and are being tried in absentia. These include the notorious Dons. Will these Godfathers remain idle while their colleagues are questioned by the Palermo court? Newsmen are trying to predict what may happen. Will the bunker be assailed by bazookas, or the Rome-Palermo plane dynamited, or at least the ferry blown up? Nobody doubts that violence is certain to come. All that is open to question is how powerful a blow the mafia may strike.

Sicilian police have girded themselves suitably for the occasion, many refusing to report for duty for some six months now, having gone into hiding or "developed" some incurable diseases. Sixty of them have managed to get themselves transferred to mainland Italy. This is unlikely to enable them to escape "offers they can't refuse" from the Sicilian mafia. Should the Dons decide that one or other policeman has lived too long, he will be taken for the traditional walk, or such is the view in Sicily. It is a sensational trial. But while the lawyers and prosecutors are talking, Sicilians are keeping mum. In line with local etiquette, to all questions about the mafia they say they weren't there, or that if they were there they had nodded off, as otherwise they might find themselves in a sleep from which they will never wake up.

However, it is not only in

Sicily's brilliant sunshine that people habitually "hear nothing" and "go nowhere," or snore quietly if they do. This sort of behaviour is characteristic of many in Italy much farther north: in Rome, for



Relaxed behind bars. The mafiosi clearly expect help from their friends.

Photo from Panorama (Italy)

instance, which, if the media are to be believed, is nothing but a Land of Nod. Roman VIPs sleep tight whenever the mafia is mentioned. No wonder the 210 detectives in the Palermo CID have only one pair of binoculars between them and are obliged to borrow cars to shadow criminals. The mafiosi, on the other hand, ride in style in bullet-proof cars from one undercover apartment to another.

In 1982 General Dalla Chiesa, Palermo's prefect who declared war on the mafia, was slain. The vigilant general was a lone ranger in sleepy Sicily, the central government denying him any help. According to the Paris Monde, Dalla Chiesa's presence in Palermo "threatened to upset the 'congenial climate' between the mafia and Sicily's politico-economic establishment, dominated by the Christian Democratic Party, which is equally omnipotent in Rome."

Could this be why, with the mafia on trial in Palermo, it is the police who are hiding?

V. KAZAKOV

HEROIN F "KHALISTA"

Once he was Adel Legari, a Milan-based passport holder, who with the mafia were in the police file. However, he was no longer Adel Legari, but Khalisa, a citizen of the state of Khalistan.



WHO KILLED SUHEIL TAWILE?

On the night of February 23, several unidentified persons broke into the Beirut flat of Suheil Tawile, a member of the Central Committee of the Lebanese Communist Party, kidnapped him and then killed him, shooting him six times in the head. Similar acts were perpetrated at the same time elsewhere in the Lebanese capital, with more than 40 Communists abducted that night.

Suheil Tawile's murder is far from being the first anonymous reprisal against Lebanese progressives. Earlier, on February 20, a group of unidentified motorcyclists machine-gunned a car, killing outright Khalil Naus, leader of the Beirut branch of the Lebanese Communist Party, who was inside.

True, on March 4 Lebanese newspapers reported that eleven terrorists had been executed. They were responsible for the explosions outside the premises of the Lebanese Communist Party and the Democratic Liberation Front of Palestine, an attempt on the life of Walid Joumblatt, leader of the Lebanon's Progressive Socialist Party, and many other acts of murder and subversion. All in all, they had killed 277 people and injured another 1,111.

Can we say that they have had the justice that the terrorism is to say it is hard to optimistic reply, the according to the members of this terror also had connections intelligence service A

One does not need especially perspicacity to identify who stands to gain from the internecine conflict and the murder of who so consistently political settlement. It is easy to realize that as Israel occupies the land, it can smuggle without difficulty into and even into Beirut

to do to effect this metamorphosis was grow a beard, don a turban, and style himself a Sikh. The name was bestowed by the leaders of "Khalistan," the nonexistent state that Sikh separatists want to establish in the Indian Punjab.

When storming the "Khalistan" bastion, the Punjabi Golden Temple of Amritsar, in the summer of 1984, Indian troops discovered secret drug caches. A little later two Sikhs were apprehended in Brussels for trafficking in heroin. The money earned was spent buy-

ing arms for the terrorists. In the summer of 1985, \$40 million worth of drugs were confiscated in a Sikh temple in Woodside Queens in New York.

It is now 1986, and again "Khalistan" terrorists are entrenched in the Golden Temple. As they need money and arms, the drug traffic has got brisker. In recent months Indian authorities have intercepted some 600 kilos of "Khalistan" heroin. When in January four Sikhs were arrested in the U.K. on charges of plotting to assassinate Ra-

jiv Gandhi, one of them was found to possess a large quantity of drugs.

After long reflection the British judiciary has launched an investigation into the "Khalistan" drug traffic. However, only after a statement was sent in by an influential member of London's Indian community. "Without profits from the drugs," he wrote, "it is not possible for Dr Jagjit Singh Chauhan [the "president of Khalistan" currently resident in Britain—L.Y.] to buy arms on that scale." Whence the drugs? Experts

point to Pakistan, which is now possibly the West's chief supplier of heroin. However, the "Khalistanis" are now looking for other sources—with the mafia's help. And Adelbarfo-Khalsa, the Bombay weekly Blitz notes, has gone off to Ecuador where "Khalistan" has opened a "mission." To meet Latin America's "cocaine kings," perhaps?

Could this mean a new criminal syndicate, the "Khalistan Connection," has arrived on the drug scene?

L. YELIN



MAJOR KOTHNY'S NO-GOOD GAS MASKS

Major Erik Kothny of the Bundeswehr is a man with clout. Not only in the F.R.G. army but also among the Afghan dushmans. In 1982 he crossed over into Afghanistan from Pakistan with a dushman band. With the counter-revolutionaries the intrepid major raided defenceless villages. Not that he actually fired any shots. He simply observed and gave generously of his advice and experience. Eventually, he wrote stories for the F.R.G.'s Second TV Channel and a newspaper.

In 1984 Major Kothny founded an anti-Afghan organization pretentiously styled "Dignity, Freedom and Humanism." This "dignified, free and humane" society immediately found a "dig-

nified" job by setting up an ultra-high frequency transmitter called "Free Afghanistan" for the dushmans. At the close of the same year the major personally entered Afghanistan, again through the back door, to get the subversive radio station going. His superiors are well aware of the illicit trips he is making to a country with which the F.R.G. maintains diplomatic relations. Perhaps his connections help him to get away with it, or maybe certain quarters in the Bundeswehr have a soft spot for the dushmans. Whatever the case, Kothny's superiors claim that he went to Afghanistan not as a serviceman but as a private person, and hence did not infringe the regulations, while international laws are not the Bundeswehr's concern.

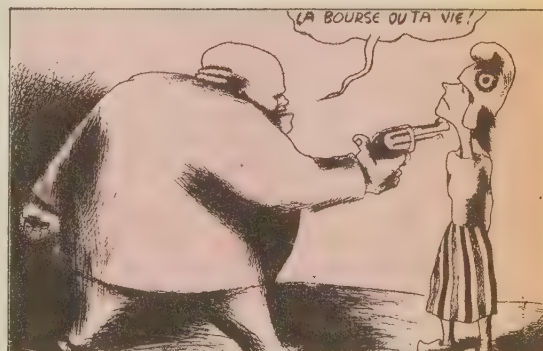
Having got the transmitter operational, the major next turned to gas masks. He rounded up a hundred or so and planned to ship them to the dushmans, thereby suggesting that Soviet forces are using chemical weapons in Afghanistan, a falsehood that many journalists and experts from international organizations have already refuted. Kothny himself has now shown that he does not believe his own fairy tales, says the Berlin weekly Weltbühne, as otherwise he would not have offered gas masks declared unfit by the Bundeswehr. Major Kothny evidently thought he could profit from humanism without running any risks.

Y. YERSHOV

THE BOURSE OR YOUR LIFE!

France is going through a difficult time. The slowing down of inflation at the close of last year brought no real relief, as other indices certainly do not betray an economic upswing. There are already 2.3 million unemployed, and it is predicted that they will soon number three million if not four.

Among them is Alain Clavaud, whom factory owners are sacking for political motives to deter others from speaking up for their rights and expressing indignation over the legalized arbitrary behaviour of the employers.



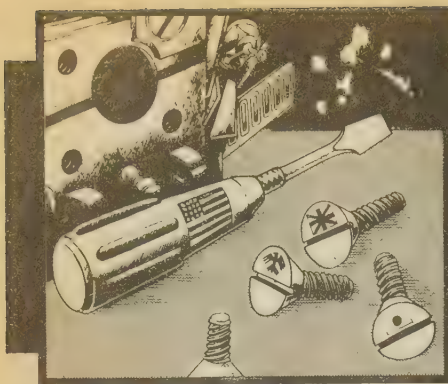
Francis Lalanne sings a song popular in France today: "Look at my hands, comrade, look what they have come to, comrade, ever since I lost the right to work with them. They are broken, my working hands."

However, not everyone is singing sad songs. Those who anticipate a political comeback for the Big Business parties at the general election on Sunday, March 16, are whistling merrily. Meanwhile the Bourse is ecstatic, as the Right-wing parties have pledged to dismantle working-class social gains and privatize nationalized enterprises.

In the cartoon the gunman pointing his pistol at poor little Marianne says: "The bourse or your life!" (in French the word "bourse" also means purse.) What is Marianne to do?

V. TSOPPI

Cartoon from L'Humanité (France)



HITCHING THE ALLIES TO "STAR WARS"

Three years ago President Ronald Reagan announced his Strategic Defence Initiative.

Has Washington succeeded in harnessing its allies to SDI? What will participation in this space adventure of their transatlantic patron give them? Are they aware of the consequences with which involvement in SDI is fraught? These questions are discussed below.

BOTH CARROT AND STICK

Few in Western Europe believe that it is possible to create a "space shield" capable of preventing nuclear war and making the future of mankind secure. Most people realize that the militarization of outer space will further escalate the arms race and make peace less stable. Nevertheless, more and more West European politicians and businessmen are coming out in support of SDI, joining in its realization, or evincing an interest in it.

The leaders of some countries, above all Britain and the F.R.G., have publicly gone back on their initial criticism of SDI. Washington is now counting on other partners, following the example of London, Bonn and Rome, joining in the "star wars" project shortly. With the exception of Greece and Australia, whose governments have declared that their countries will not take part in SDI either directly or indirectly other U.S. allies take an equivocal stand.

Brussels, for instance, says that the final decision has not yet been taken. At the same time, official spokesmen, ministers included, publicly eulogize SDI. Paris and The Hague are officially against involvement in the U.S. space war programme, but nevertheless welcome the inclusion in it of industrial firms and research centres in France and the Netherlands.

Behind this duplicity one can discern the traditional orientation on Washington, a striving to profit by entering into space contracts, and the hope of gaining access to the most up-to-date technology. Propaganda plays a no small part in the efforts to involve Western Europe in SDI. Along with Washington, NATO is playing an active part in this brainwashing campaign.

The Atlanticist leaders miss no opportunity to offer "good advice" to West European politicians, industrialists and scientists. They organize diverse briefings, conferences, and other assemblies addressed by the men in charge of SDI and its supporters. Pressure is brought to bear on the intransigent. An instance of this propaganda drive is the speech General Bernard Rogers, NATO Supreme Commander in Europe, delivered in Brussels on February 27. Admitting that the views of the NATO allies on "star wars" vary, Rogers voiced apprehensions that the debate on this issue "could become so divisive that cohesion and unity would be affected." To prevent this and to reassure the allies, the general argued that there really was no cause for controversy. SDI, he said, was not a programme for the development of weapons but a research plan directed, moreover, at developing "conventional defence" and not offensive systems. Washington, he maintained, is

now trying to ascertain whether such a "defensive system" was at all possible, what it would cost, and how effective it would be.

In other words, SDI is not only perfectly safe but profitable to boot. "Even if defensive systems were never deployed, the spin-offs would be considerable," the general argued. But neither did he forget the traditional "stick" — the mythical "Soviet threat." If the Soviets outstripped the United States, "we would find ourselves in a very difficult situation," he said.

The NATO Supreme Commander urged West Europeans not to limit themselves to supporting SDI but to go further to the deployment in Western Europe of an "anti-missile shield," something in the order of a ground-based appendage to the American SDI. The idea of working out a "European defence initiative" (EDI) was first advanced by the Americans, and now it is vigorously pushed by Bonn, and primarily F.R.G. Defence Minister Manfred Wörner. Rogers was "disappointed" to find that the other European countries "had not taken seriously West German proposals." In his opinion, the allies should cooperate in both SDI and EDI. The one does not exclude the other.

Many prominent experts have underscored the dangers with which such plans are fraught. But the fact remains that the American bait is being taken. Why do some West European leaders close their eyes to the gravity of the threat attendant on the realization of the U.S. "star wars" plans? In reply to this question, Benoît d'Aboville, deputy director for disarmament in the French Foreign Ministry, recalled a French folk story. Its gist is this. The pope of Avignon wanted to talk with his mule and offered a large sum of money to anyone who taught the animal to speak. A peasant responded to the offer and returned home with the reward in his pocket after having promised to teach the mule to talk in ten years' time. Hearing of this, his fellow villagers asked

him what he was counting on. In ten years, he replied, one of us will be dead—the mule, the pope, or I.

The tale may be an amusing one, but

building present-day policy on medieval cunning is a risky business.

V. BOIKOV

Brussels

BRITAIN

TALE OF COMPLICITY

Just over a year ago, in the capacity of a member of the board of the Foreign Press Association in London, I had occasion to be involved in making the arrangements for a debate on space defence systems. A debate of course presupposes that its participants represent different, and better still, contrary viewpoints. As it was, however, we had trouble in finding among prominent British political figures votaries of Reagan's "star wars" programme whom we could invite to take part. Finally we found one who agreed to take up the cudgels on behalf of the scheme—the well-known anti-Sovieteer Lord Chalfont. And he did so with reservations.

At that time SDI came under criticism from literally all sides, the Tory leadership included. Shortly before the debate, Margaret Thatcher, during her Washington visit, had come out against the deployment of ABM systems in outer space. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Malcolm Rifkind had hinted broadly at the aggressive character of the "star wars" programme, and Minister of State for Defence Procurement Geoffrey Pattie predicted an enormous growth of military spending if it were implemented.

A little more than six months later the Tory government became the first of the U.S. allies to sign with the United States an agreement on participation in SDI research. How did this come about?

In March 1982 London and Washington had concluded a deal on the rearmament of the "independent" British nuclear deterrent force with costly American Trident-2 missiles. Whitehall was jubilant: at long last Britain's prestigious membership in the "nuclear club" had been prolonged for decades. In Trident Downing Street saw a trump card in Britain's struggle for a "place under the sun" in the EEC, and later it might serve as the groundwork for the

creation of a West European nuclear potential.

Just then the U.S. President unexpectedly put forward another concept that knocked the ground from under the "nuclear deterrence" doctrine and along with it the Trident deterrence potential so dear (both literally and figuratively) to official London. For if, following the American, a Soviet space "shield" were to appear, this would make possession of Tridents meaningless.

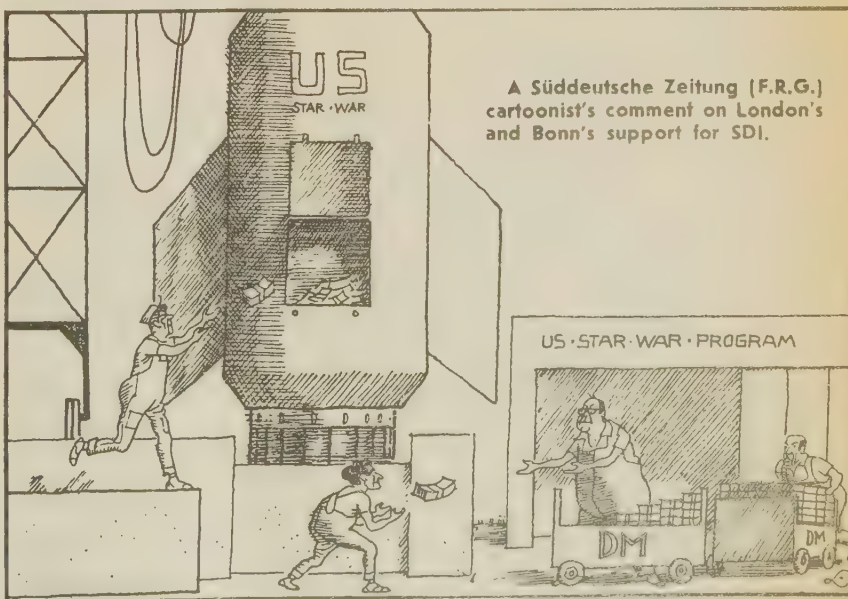
London also feared that the realization of SDI, by nullifying the existing Soviet-American understandings, in particular the ABM Treaty, would upset strategic stability and deliver the death blow to the nuclear arms control process. If both the United States and the Soviet Union possessed space "shields" or if the Soviet Union substantially increased its strategic offensive potential, "unprotected" Western Europe would inevitably be doomed to become a battlefield between the two world powers.

Imagination conjured up the fearful vision of the Americans, confident of their strategic invulnerability, turning their backs on their allies and transatlantic solidarity coming to an end.

Evidently because of this Margaret Thatcher, during her talks with President Reagan in December 1984 and February last year, persistently but unsuccessfully sought to extract assurances that all plans for testing and deploying weapons systems within the framework of SDI would be made the subject of Soviet-American talks and consultations with the United States' allies. At the same time Britain did not object to research under the SDI programme on the plea that, for one thing, the Soviet Union had allegedly been engaged in such research for a long time, and, for another, effective control over such research was impossible. Actually it was already at the Camp David meeting of Reagan and Margaret Thatcher that the basis was laid for British participation in the initial, "research" stage of the "star wars" programme.

After returning from her pilgrimage across the ocean, the British Prime Minister tried to justify Britain's consent to take part in SDI research by ascribing it to the fact that President Reagan's decision "could not be changed." Participation in the U.S. programme in one or another way, she maintained, would enable Britain to influence the U.S. position.

True enough, the U.S. President is not easily persuaded. The point, however, is that Washington was quick to sense Britain's inconsistency. Following the critical view voiced in public by British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe, the U.S. Administration stepped up efforts to gain the backing of its allies by offering them economic inducements. In



late March last year U.S. Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger formally invited them to join in SDI research, promising private business in these countries a big share in the \$26 billion earmarked for contracts.

London weighed the proposition for quite some time. On the one hand, the Conservatives were the loudest of all in criticizing the "star wars" concept. The leaders of the British war office were well aware of how difficult it would be to halt the research, which would lead to testing and eventually the deployment of space weapons. On the other hand, monopoly quarters feared that in the process of SDI research the U.S. could widen the technological gap between itself and Western Europe. Perhaps it was better to swallow one's too outspoken words, line up for the multi-billion-dollar transatlantic feed bag and, making use of the "special relationship," ensure oneself access to advanced American technology? In time, the reasoning went, this could be used as a trump card to gain technological leadership in the EEC.

At first, to be on the safe side, official London (scared, incidentally, by Washington's angry reaction to Howe's speech) toned down criticism of the "star wars" programme. And then the carrot of economic and technological benefits outweighed British objections to the programme on the military and political plane.

Britain was the first to enter into negotiations with the U.S. on the terms of the participation of British firms in SDI research. Above all, it wanted U.S. guarantees of free access to American technology and permission for commercial use by British firms of the results of that research, as well as a substantial share, running to \$1.5 billion, in the orders placed under the programme. Finally, in December last year an arrangement was concluded between the two countries regulating their cooperation in "star wars" research, specifically, the participation in it of British firms.

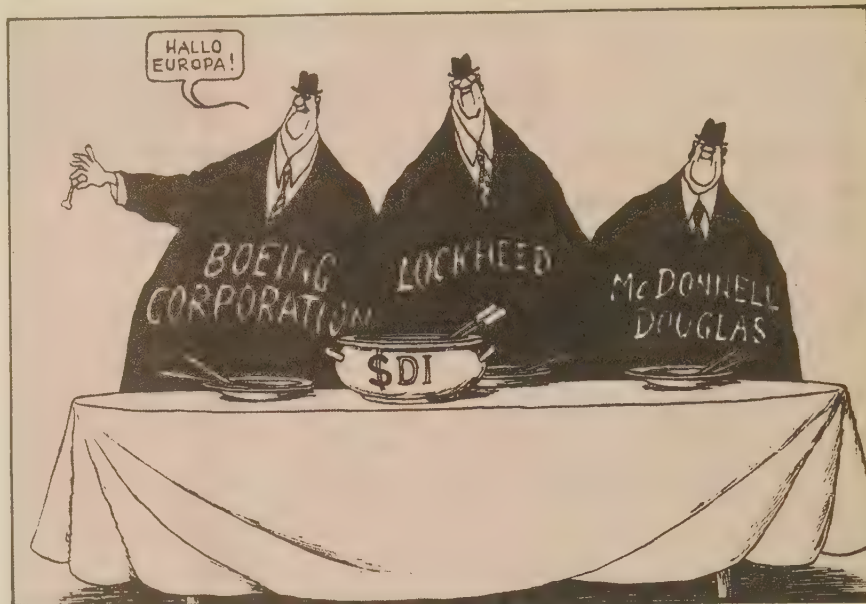
Here we have another instance of Britain toeing the White House line. Moreover, the Tory cabinet seemed to have completely forgotten the serious reservations it had had as regards the military and political consequences of the "star wars" programme.

However, in their drive for economic and political dividends from SDI, the Conservatives, as so many times before, did not reckon with the cunning of their ally. On the plea that government contracts necessarily had to remain confidential, Washington declined to give any guarantees that the British demands would be met. On the other hand, the participation agreement provides for British researchers working in the Unit-

ed States, a plain case of brain drain. More than 30 British firms and research institutions fell for the American bait and evinced readiness to take part in SDI

about the political weight Britain might gain by full involvement in the "star wars" programme.

In short, judging by British press



American monopolies will devour the lion's share of the orders under the \$26-billion SDI programme, with only meagre pickings going to the United States' allies.

From the weekly Vorwärts (F.R.G.)

research. However, even official Whitehall spokesmen have had to admit that so far no more than 10 contracts to a total value of £1,000,000 are being negotiated and that there are not likely to be any bigger deals for two or three years. British industrialists are rapidly losing faith in Britain obtaining in the next five years—the time allotted by the Americans for SDI research—contracts anywhere near the \$1.5 billion former Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine bargained for. Instead, the British are being offered the role of subcontractors for giant Pentagon suppliers like Rockwell, Boeing and Martin-Marietta.

Nor have Tory hopes of involvement in SDI giving a new spur to the British-U.S. "special relationship" materialized. The Reagan Administration of course wants "respectable and prestigious" Britain to be a party to the project, but there are no indications that the Americans are ready to reward British "loyalty" with any privileges. Moreover, as the British Financial Times rightly observed, U.S. officials are worried

comment and the remarks of certain officials, cooperation between the "special partners" is not working out. Both the City and Downing Street are beginning to realize to their horror that instead of handing out a fat slice of the \$26 billion SDI pie, Washington intends to make its allies finance their own research under the project, while reserving the right to skim the cream off the final results. More, London has allowed its hands to be tied by American laws on the protection of state secrets. British firms and scientists involved in "star wars" research are shamelessly made subject to American loyalty tests. They are strictly forbidden to comment publicly on their work and particularly on possible setbacks and lags behind the official timetable.

The debate on the SDI programme in the House of Lords in late February showed that opposition to the short-sighted policy of the Tory government is mounting in Britain. The country's political and public circles are increasingly awakening to the fact that by embarking on the slippery path of participation in "star wars" research, the Tories have involved Britain in the Reagan Administration's efforts to destabilize the military-strategic balance between East and West. And this is fraught with the risk not only of Britain find-

ing itself the loser economically, but of the groundwork being undermined for the revival of military détente in Europe, in which, according to recent public

statements by the country's political leaders, Britain is very much interested.

M. BOGDANOV

London-Moscow

F.R.G.

KEY ROLE

The international conferences sponsored annually in Munich by the F.R.G. military science association Wehrkunde bring together the cream of the elite—ministers, generals, members of parliament and particularly trusted journalists. Opinions are voiced at them more frankly than at official NATO sessions.

At last year's Munich conference Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl first declared in support of SDI, which he said "shifts the accent from offensive nuclear weapons to non-nuclear defensive armaments." To impart a semblance of objectivity to the Bonn approach to the American design, the Chancellor made a number of reservations. For one thing, he expatiated on the need to maintain strategic stability, which, he said, ruled out all striving for military superiority. It was clear, Kohl said, that the U.S. intended to sustain and eventually strengthen strategic stability by means of SDI.

Now Bonn has laid aside all doubts and has become the most loyal supporter of the U.S. plans for the militarization of outer space. In December last year the F.R.G. government, bypassing the parliament, decided to enter into talks on participation of F.R.G. firms in the SDI programme. A relevant agreement is expected to be signed by the end of March.

Now Munich has again been the venue of an assembly of high-placed visitors. From Washington came Fred Ikle of the Pentagon, who urged the United States' West European allies to join in SDI and to everybody's surprise said that strategic stability should not be a NATO objective at all. According to him, the West has to win the arms race. Such candour is rare. Actually Ikle only confirmed what the opponents of "star wars" have repeatedly warned against—that the realization of SDI would not make the world any safer and would not "devalue" nuclear arsenals. On the contrary, if the arms race is allowed to spill over into outer space, it will get out of hand and stability will be totally ruled out.

F.R.G. Defence Minister Manfred Wörner was not at all taken aback by Ikle's candour. Speaking at the Munich con-

ference, he repeated the official Bonn evaluation of SDI as "justified, politically necessary and according with the security interests of the West as a whole." Moreover, the minister proposed complementing SDI with a European Defence Initiative—the creation of a system capable of destroying medium-range and tactical missiles.

To begin with, Wörner said, it would be a matter only of something in the order of "extended air defence." The purpose of such a system would not be the protection of the entire territory of Western Europe, and it would be land-, not space-based, and not directly linked with SDI. Wörner warned against building "castles in the air" and pressed for the modernization of existing armaments. At the same time SDI research would continue and some of its results could be used even before the development of a "finalized" European anti-missile system is completed. Wörner spoke of the possibility of using electromagnetic beam and laser weapons. Thus, his idea of "modernization" of air defence would be in a sense an intermediate stage on the way to the realization of SDI and its European variant.

What is the purport of the Wörner "initiative"?

First, it would make it possible to satisfy the appetites of the West Euro-

pean and primarily the F.R.G. war industry concerns. The bosses of these concerns already now are apprehensive, and with good reason, that the Pentagon will hand out the lion's share of SDI contracts to its own monopolies. The chairman of the board of Siemens, Karlheinz Kaske, complained recently about no more than \$250 million, or 5 per cent, of the \$5 billion allocated annually for the SDI programme going to the West Europeans. But if the European Defence Initiative were to be launched the figure would run into the billions, for this programme would be financed by the West European countries.

Second, the Wörner "initiative" is aimed at overcoming the differences that are asserting themselves in NATO because of SDI. Bonn expects "modernization" of air defence to be more acceptable to the allies than the fantastic "star wars" scenarios. And through such modernization they could in one way or another join in the SDI programme.

It will be remembered that Bonn lent Washington a bigger hand than anyone else in giving effect to the NATO "double-track" decision. It not only agreed to the deployment of nuclear missiles on its own territory, but brought pressure to bear on the hesitant. A similar role is now allotted Bonn in giving effect to the plans for the militarization of outer space. This was openly admitted by the Federal Chancellor's foreign policy adviser Horst Teltschik. "Had the Federal Republic not sited the missiles, no one would have done so," he said. "In the realization of SDI too the key role belongs to the F.R.G."

Teltschik knew what he was talking about.

A. TOLPEGIN

Our Own Correspondent

Bonn

ITALY

FALLING OVER THEMSELVES

Sober-minded politicians in Italy have no illusions about SDI not being something much more than a research project. It is an attempt by the United States to lay its hands on everything new, forward-looking and promising in European scientific and technological thought, both military and civilian, to

bring it all under its monopoly and to use it to establish Washington's global superiority. As the U.S. has tried to do so many times before using armed force, dollars, oil, food, nuclear technology and other expedients as levers.

For many Italian firms, especially war industry concerns, which make exten-

sive use of American capital, equipment, patents and licences, technological dependence on the United States is an established fact. Also faced with problems are those Italian firms that are no less dependent on West European technology, on which the French Eureka project, aimed at accelerating the building of a "united Europe," is primarily oriented.

The new variant of the old adage about the choice between two bundles of hay was best of all formulated by Raffaele Palieri, vice-chairman of the Italian National Association of the Electrotechnic and Electronic Industries. Speaking of the contest between SDI and Eureka, he said:

"On the one hand, the political and military prestige of the (transatlantic) superpower and its ability to unite its NATO partners are at stake. On the other hand, an opportunity is opening for the EEC to reanimate its political initiatives by giving a spur to cooperation among employers in the sphere of the latest technology."

Which, then, are the Italians to prefer: the United States of America or the United States of Europe?

Weighing the pros and cons, the Bettino Craxi government left it to the leading Italian concerns to make their choice independently. And they have done so. Their common opinion was expressed by the Fiat top executive Umberto Agnelli in the following curt and businesslike terms:

"The American programme is realistic, whereas Eureka is not. SDI is based on a serious, 1,200-page study and has a definite director, the U.S. government plus a special organization with a staff of 750, the driving force (appropriations totalling \$26 billion) and a definite initial objective — ascertaining the feasibility of an anti-missile defence system. Eureka, on the contrary, is only an attractive hypothesis."

Umberto Agnelli's brother and business partner Gianni Agnelli put it even more concisely: what is in question is a contest for admission to the "high technology club"; for those left out of it the door to the future is closed.

This is the opinion not only of the Agnelli brothers. Within a week of the ultimatum issued at the end of May last year by Caspar Weinberger, giving sixty days' time for replying to the invitation to join in the "star wars" programme, applications piled up on the desk of the head of the government armament board, Giuseppe Piovano. At the same time Fiat, Montedison, and Finmeccanica (which is associated with the Aeritalia and Ansaldo companies) opened special consultation offices in Washington. These were instructed to extract orders at all costs from General James Ab-

rahamson, who is in charge of the SDI project.

To put up an impressive front before the Americans, other companies formed a consortium — the CITES, which takes in the Agusta, Oto Melara, Galileo, Breda Meccanica Bresciana, Elettronica, Marconi, and SMA firms. Along with the military, they all are anxious to get the Appenine "boot" into outer space.

Washington is gratified by the abundance and zeal of applicants. But like a rich bride it is not in a hurry and prefers to pick and choose. "The Americans," the journal *Europeo* observed, "are looking in Europe for something special, some definite method or a brilliant idea... The Pentagon is convinced that somewhere in Europe there is some small secret factory producing geniuses — researchers and technical experts who are inadequately utilized here — and is out to find them. It is not interested in the industrialist as such unless he looks as 'American' as Gianni Agnelli does."

During an official visit to Rome General Abrahamson lifted the veil on what the Pentagon wants in Italy — technology involving the use of infrared rays and lasers, thermography, new materials and computers. With true

Yankee bluntness the distinguished guest warned those who had an eye on a slice of the multibillion dollar pie that at the initial stage the U.S. has only crumbs to offer — minor contracts running to a total of few tens of millions of dollars. These contracts would be concluded with a narrow group of researchers working for the firms that come on top in a contest specially organized for the purpose.

The number of would-be participants immediately dropped. Of the remaining offers the Pentagon was most interested in the laser technology worked out at the CISE laboratory in Milan (the ENEL company), space technology and satellites (Aeritalia), radar devices (Selenia), infrared sensors (CITES), ceramics and the new Fonblin lubricant capable of withstanding extremely high temperatures (Montedison).

While experts try the new lubricant and businessmen using radar, infrared rays and lasers are trying to estimate the dimensions of the future profits, sober-minded politicians are asking whether this drive for "star wars" profits and illusory superiority will not turn Italy, and with it the whole planet, into very real star dust.

L. MAKAREVICH

JAPAN

BEFORE THE RUBICON

When Tokyo received the "Weinberger ultimatum" in late March last year few had any doubts that the Japanese government would once again promptly snap to attention. There was a reason for this.

During his visit to the United States in the beginning of 1985 Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone had expressed his "understanding" of SDI and later, at the Bonn meeting of the Seven, he had urged support of the U.S. position. And Japanese Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe promised a reply to the ultimatum within the given time limit, though he did point to some uncertainties as regards many aspects of SDI.

In the year that has passed since then Japan's position has remained indefinite. This is giving rise to growing concern both in Washington and among the

Japanese leaders who are constantly calling for "Western solidarity." Nakasone recently said that the reply cannot be postponed "endlessly." There is more and more frequent mention of the date of that reply—either mid-April, when Nakasone and Abe are to pay an official visit to Washington, or in early May, when the Seven are due to meet in Tokyo.

What the answer will be is still not altogether clear. What is clear is that political and business circles and broad sections of the public are becoming increasingly convinced that the "star wars" programme runs counter to the national interests. This is conceded even by the advocates of a positive answer who favour meeting Washington halfway in exchange for damping down on criticism of the growing imbalance

of U.S.-Japanese trade and on threats of protectionist countermeasures. Others, while admitting the possibility of adverse political consequences for Japan, are apprehensive of missing out on the scientific and technological fruits of SDI research and speak of channelling to civilian branches the military technology acquired as a result of involvement in it. Still another group of advocates of Japan's participation in "star wars" hopes to put over the old act of pretending to resent American pressure while taking another step towards turning Japan into a military superpower. Moreover, this time the step must be an ambitious one and take Japan a long way towards the acquisition of an independent nuclear-missile potential.

The first set of arguments put forward by the opponents of SDI is associated with the foreign policy consequences. The Japanese Big Business mouthpiece *Nihon Keizai* writes: "Most likely this system will heighten international tension and increase military spending since the object is simultaneously to reinforce strategic nuclear systems and to conduct SDI research and development." And the

active and against the heightening of the country's international prestige.

Japan, as the only country to have experienced the horrors of nuclear bombing, has a special right to say in the discussion of problems relating to nuclear disarmament. But until recently it made practically no use of that right. It was only in 1984 that Shintaro Abe submitted to the Geneva disarmament conference a proposal aimed at the total termination of underground nuclear tests. But how can this call to end the testing of nuclear weapons be reconciled with the deployment of these weapons in outer space?

The second set of arguments against joining in "star wars" is connected with the domestic political consequences of such a move. It would primarily be another blow at the Constitution, which prohibits joining with other countries in military moves. In 1969 the Japanese parliament passed a resolution limiting the exploration and use of outer space by Japan strictly to peaceful purposes. For a country the majority of whose population is subject to a painful "nuclear allergy" participation in "star wars" would signify the further erosion of the famous "three non-nuclear principles." After all, nowadays few seek to conceal the nuclear character of SDI by claiming that its purpose is to "make the nuclear weapon powerless." According to the *Japan Times*, a U.S. Administration spokesman told his Japanese counterparts in Tokyo that SDI is designed to strengthen rather than eliminate the present nuclear deterrence arsenal. The doubling in the draft U.S. federal budget for the coming year of spending on the nuclear component of "star wars" did not go unnoticed in Japan. Even Nakasone, speaking in parliament, had to voice disquiet over the "nuclear essence of SDI."

The fact that Japanese scientists' access to U.S. military laboratories is made conditional on adoption of draconian secrecy laws is seen by Japanese public opinion as another indication of the adverse effect of Japan's involvement in SDI on the domestic situation.

The third set of arguments relates to questions that at first glance would seem to be purely technical. For one thing, many in Japan take a sceptical view of the whole project. A serious blow to faith in American technology was dealt by the disaster that overtook the space shuttle Challenger and shortly before that by the crash of the Boeing 747, said to be the "safest plane in the world."

Besides, the Japanese government conceded at the end of last year that "not too many companies want to take part in SDI research." Why? Firms re-

nowned for their up-to-date and reliable consumer durables are often perfectly satisfied with their profits and prefer not to discredit themselves in the eyes of the public by getting involved in a dubious military programme. Nor do they believe in the shower of super-modern technology being promised to SDI participants.

Industrialists are also afraid the Americans will make use of SDI to break into their laboratories. Japan and Western Europe, the *Japan Quarterly* observed, have already outstripped the U.S. in technology and industrial power; the U.S. has retained primacy only in space research, and the "by-products" of SDI were designed only to give a spur to American industry. Japanese Big Business does not see this outlook as reassuring.

The arguments advanced by the opponents of involvement in "star wars" are weighty indeed. Nevertheless the votaries of "Western solidarity," regardless of the flimsiness of their case, are doing their utmost to impel Japan on to a dubious course. The Japanese Foreign Ministry, for instance, has issued a document contending that even nuclear-powered space weapons conform to Japan's three non-nuclear principles. Before that another set of principles prohibiting the export of military technology was declared to be less important than the Japanese-American Security Treaty. The result was the conclusion of the 1983 bilateral agreement under which the latest achievements of Japanese science and technology that can be used for military purpose may be exported to the U.S. Not long ago the U.S. Administration appointed special emissaries from the army, navy, air force and the marine corps to pick out whatever they find useful in Japanese laboratories.

Which side will gain the upper hand in the controversy over involvement in "star wars"? Will Tokyo give its full support to the adventurist project or will it choose the "West German formula" which opens the way to participation "only of private firms"? The signs are that these questions will be answered shortly. It will then be seen exactly how valid is Japan's claim to be independent in its decision-making.

Y. TAVROVSKY

Our Own Correspondent

Tokyo



An artist's impression of a nuclear-pumped combat laser in space.

From *Der Spiegel*
(F.R.G.)

Asahi points out: "Since the Soviet Union is bound to take countermeasures, would not a new round in the arms race become inevitable? Europe and Japan... need relaxation of tension in relations with the Soviet Union even more than the United States."

Tokyo is aware that if it becomes involved in "star wars" it would have to share the responsibility for the resultant increase in international tension and instability and the escalation of the arms race. It also realizes that participation in SDI would work against the tendency in Japanese diplomacy to become more

NO PROTECTORS NEEDED

VYACHESLAV VALKOV

Recently I happened to sit in on a readers' conference in the village of Marinovka, Kustanai Region. Most of the villagers are Germans. The first thing that caught my eye in Marinovka was a huge Palace of Culture. There was a crowd in front of it, German could be heard spoken everywhere, and bookstalls selling German books, published both in the Soviet Union and abroad, were doing a brisk trade. The readers' conference was followed by a concert, with local talent performing Russian and German songs and dances from various countries. It was a real folk festival.

I walked through the village, looked at the collective farmers' sturdy homes and well-tended gardens and talked with local people whom Western propaganda refers to as "victims of the Soviet regime" when holding forth about "discrimination against German ethnic minorities in East European countries."

Interest in the position of citizens of German nationality in socialist countries is being stirred up increasingly in the West, in the F.R.G. in particular. This is not a fortuity. With the CDU/CSU bloc and the Free Democratic Party in power in the F.R.G., a political climate favourable to out-and-out revanchists dreaming of the restoration of the German Reich within its 1937 frontiers has established itself there. The concept of "German unity" is back in circulation, attempts are again made to legalize the F.R.G.'s right to represent all Germans, noisy gatherings of revanchist communities are arranged on the Rhine one after another. Impudent claims are laid to the territories of socialist countries. It is suggested to Germans living in the U.S.S.R., Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Hungary that the F.R.G. is their only true home. A purposeful campaign is in progress, masterminded by those who hope to prove that there is discrimination against German ethnic minorities in socialist countries. This campaign is part of the political offensive mounted by Right-wing forces in the F.R.G. who seek to revise the outcome of World War II and bury détente.

The debate in the West German Bundestag on the position of Soviet citizens of German nationality is nothing but a gross interference in our

country's internal affairs. Incidentally, as they spoke of the "sad plight" of Soviet Germans, Alfred Dregger, leader of the CDU/CSU's parliamentary faction, and Herbert Hupka, chief of the revanchist Union of Silesian Germans, were able to adduce no proof of the German minority's rights being impinged upon in the Soviet Union. The rally of the Association of Germans from Russia, held under the slogan "Germany Is Our Homeland," was openly provocative. Under cover of phrases about the "oppression" of Soviet Germans participants in the rally unambiguously called for political pressure to be brought



At the 27th CPSU Congress Natalja Gellert was elected an alternate member of the Central Committee.

Photo by A. Strizhkov

to bear on the U.S.S.R. One expects little else from an organization known for its pathological hatred for the Soviet Union. The surprising thing is that the F.R.G. government sent its official representative to the rally, and that the Federal Chancellor and the Federal Minister for the Interior extended greetings to the participants. Are these acts compatible with assurances of adherence to the policy of détente?

Most of the F.R.G. population do not know the truth about the position of Germans in the Soviet Union because Western accounts of the life of citizens of German nationality here are distorted. Quite recently, the Frankfurter Allgemeine carried an article under the eloquent headline of "Are Germans of the Soviet Union Still German?" Well, citizens of the F.R.G. who have visited the Soviet Union and taken an unbiased look at contemporary Soviet life (writers Emil Carlebach and Manfred Bosch among them) had ample opportunity to see how far from the truth assertions about "discrimination" against or "Russification" of Germans in the Soviet Union are.

Their Motherland Is Russia

The first German settlements appeared in Russia more than 200 years ago. Their inhabitants fled from a Germany torn asunder by the Seven Years' War of 1756-63, seeking refuge from social oppression and religious persecution. The mass migration of Germans to Russia continued in the 19th century as well. Class stratification in German settlements heightened social contradictions in them. The German settlers became increasingly active in the revolutionary movement in Russia. The name of Emmanuel Quiring, a member of the Communist Party from 1912, secretary of the Bolshevik faction in the Fourth State Duma and one of the first associates of the newspaper Pravda, is well known here. After the October Revolution Quiring was deputy chairman of the All-Union Economic Council and the U.S.S.R. State Planning Committee. Ludwig Martens joined Lenin's League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class in the year of its foundation. Later he became the Soviet government's first official representative in the U.S.

Working people of German nationality defended the October Revolution with arms in hand, fought in Budyonny's First Cavalry Army and in the legendary Chapayev division. Within hours of the nazi attack on the Soviet Union, they joined the ranks of the defenders of their country. The hopes of the rulers of the Third Reich that Soviet citizens of German nationality would constitute a "fifth column" were dashed. In the hour of trial Soviet Germans proved their loyalty to the socialist Motherland.

In August 1941 news of the heroism of Red armyman Heinrich Hoffmann spread throughout the country. Gravely wounded, he was taken prisoner. The nazis tried to win him over to their side and demanded that he give them information about the Soviet Army. Hoffmann refused. He was subjected to horrible tortures, but remained true to

his oath of allegiance and died a hero's death. The legendary intelligence officer Richard Sorge laid down his life for the cause of victory over nazism. Soviet Germans fought to the last in the Brest Fortress, defended Moscow, Leningrad and Stalingrad, fought behind the lines, and selflessly worked on the home front, building plants, railways, restoring coal mines, mining coal, logging. Russia recognized their services. Many citizens of German nationality were awarded orders and medals. The title of Hero of the Soviet Union was conferred on two of them.

In postwar years citizens of German nationality, the great-grandchildren of those who settled in Russia over 200 years ago, have been working on our country's key construction sites, helping develop the natural resources of Siberia and transform the Non-Black Earth Zone. They grow grain, smelt steel, teach children, treat the sick, and contribute to the cultural progress of Soviet society.

At present there are about two million Germans in the Soviet Union. Half of them live in Kazakhstan to which they were evacuated from the Volga area during the second world war as a result of hostilities. The rest live in the Russian Federation, Kirghizia and other constituent republics. Incidentally, speaking of discrimination, the German population of the U.S.S.R. has grown by almost 20 per cent since 1959. More than 57 per cent of Soviet Germans consider German their native tongue, but almost all Germans living in the U.S.S.R. have a good command of Russian, and not because it has been thrust upon them. The peoples of the U.S.S.R. have selected Russian as their common language of communication of their own free will.

In our country there are no laws restricting the rights of the German population. The equality of all Soviet citizens irrespective of nationality is enshrined in the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. People are judged in this country not by their nationality but by their labour and achievements and their sense of civic duty. Thousands of Soviet Germans have been awarded orders and medals for their conscientious and efficient labour. They include Iwan Enns, chairman of the Zarya Kommunist collective farm in the Omsk Region, who has the Order of Lenin, the Order of the Red Banner of Labour and the Badge of Honour. The title of Hero of Socialist Labour has been conferred upon him for high results in dairy farming, for his outstanding labour achievements. Dozens of citizens of German nationality have won this title.

Iwan Enns is a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, one of the 17,500 Soviet Germans elected to Soviets at various levels. In the U.S.S.R.

Supreme Soviet, citizens of German nationality are represented by four deputies—Natalja Gellert, a farm-machine operator; Friedrich Schneider, chairman of a collective farm; Svetlana Zschoch, a pig keeper; Sofja Henning, a stock-breeding team leader. They have gained national acclaim for their industry and active involvement in public affairs. Ten Germans have been elected to the Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan. One of them, Iwan Scharf, director of an industrial amalgamation, is a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan. Four Germans have been elected to the Supreme Soviet of Kirghizia.

It is often asserted in the West that Soviet citizens of German origin are barred from executive posts. But in Kazakhstan alone there are more than 100 state farms headed by Germans. Citizens of German nationality are elected to high positions in Party, government, trade union and Komsomol organizations, and appointed heads of research, cultural, educational, medical and legal establishments. Andrej Braun, first secretary of a district committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan for many years, has been elected first deputy chairman of the Tselinograd Regional Soviet Executive Committee; Andrej Jaufmann, deputy of the Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan, has been chairman of the Kustanai Regional Soviet Executive Committee of several convocations. Viktor Leis, ex-procurator of the Sokuluk District in Kirghizia, has been appointed deputy procurator of that republic. The late Alexander Becker was for many years chief physician of the Urals Oncological Dispensary; this post is now held by Josef Deibert.

Soviet citizens of German nationality have made and continue to make a considerable contribution to Soviet science and culture. The list of Soviet German scientists and artists is very long. Suffice it to mention only a few: Peter Wiebe, doctor of medicine, director of a research institute in Sukhumi; Wladimir Henning, doctor of history, deputy director of the Institute of Archeology of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences; Nikolai Hiltz, director of the Sylviculture Institute of the Karelian branch of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences; Lew Ernst, vice-president of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Agriculture; Ernst Boos, corresponding member of the Kazakh Academy of Sciences; the actors Alisa Freundlich and Stanislaw Landgraf; the world-famous pianists Svyatoslav Richter and Rudolf Kheer.

Assertions to the effect that Soviet Germans are deprived of the chance to satisfy their national requirements in the field of language and culture are without foundation as well. Three German-language papers—Neues Leben (Moscow), Freundschaft (Tselinograd)

and Rote Fahne (Slavgorod) are published in the U.S.S.R. The literary and socio-political almanach Heimatliche Weiten comes out twice a year. Books by Soviet German writers (of whom there are nearly a hundred) are brought out in Moscow, Alma Ata and Barnaul. Days of Soviet German Literature were recently highly successful in Karaganda. Five years ago a German drama theatre was opened in the steelworkers' town of Temirtau; it tours areas with a predominantly German population. Radio stations in Alma Ata, Barnaul, Omsk and Frunze, as well as the Karaganda television station regularly transmit German-language programmes. German children learn their native language in special groups, beginning from the first form, at their parents' request. German-language teachers for these groups are trained in Novosibirsk, Kokchetav, Orenburg and other cities.

The capitalist press and Right-wing forces in the F.R.G. are making much of the "recent returnees"—Soviet citizens of German nationality who have made permanent homes in the F.R.G. But the truth is that the desire to emigrate is encouraged from the outside by foreign centres of psychological warfare. Letters, parcels and personal contacts with relatives are used for the purpose. Some people unfortunately swallow the bait of Western propaganda. But reality cures emigrants of their illusions. Having had a taste of the bourgeois way of life, returnees realize they have made a fatal mistake.

The Hamms, for instance, repented the decision to emigrate from the Soviet Union. In this country they had all they needed for a normal life: an interesting and well-paid job and a well-appointed flat. In pursuit of illusory happiness they left their home town of Nizhny Tagil for the F.R.G., taking their children with them, and are now casting about for a means of coming back.

The provocative campaign over the position of the German national minority in the U.S.S.R. meets with a firm protest from Soviet Germans. We don't need to be watched over by "good uncles" from the F.R.G., Natascha Zitzer, a student at the Orenburg Teachers' Institute, said at a Komsomol meeting. Are we citizens of their country? Why have they decided, suddenly, to protect us, total strangers to them? Don't they know that our homeland is the U.S.S.R.? A collective letter from German war and labour veterans says: "On the pretext of protecting all 'ethnic Germans' the F.R.G. government shows touching concern for Germans in the U.S.S.R. with a view to using them in the cold war. The federal government would do better to attend to its own problems, of which there are more than enough."

IS THE MISSILE ISSUE REALLY CLOSED?

462 Herengracht, Amsterdam. "Welcome to the cradle of Dutch capitalism," the host heartily bade us enter. A little later, as we sat over the traditional Dutch lunch of freshly salted herring with milk, I learned that Mr van Eeghen had been quite serious: his trading company, the oldest in the country, had been passing from father to son for more than 300 years. The people of Amsterdam have good words to say for the ancestors of the present owner: they did a great deal to make the city prosperous.

But why did the businessman, for whom every minute counted, willingly agree to receive us, representatives of the Soviet Peace Committee visiting the Netherlands at the invitation of Dutch anti-war campaigners?

I first heard the name van Eeghen from my Dutch friends in a context which seemed to have little to do with business, namely, in connection with the deployment of U.S. missiles in the country. Van Eeghen, a veteran of the second world war, is a man of infectious optimism. Using his wide connections in the country and outside it, he has conducted a "personal diplomacy" campaign, as they say here, over the past few years to promote disarmament and better East-West relations.

"Everyone should feel responsible for what is happening in our world," he says.

Personal Contribution

Van Eeghen's views are shared by many of his compatriots. Awareness of this responsibility has been growing fast in the Netherlands. It has taken just a few years to jolt out of their "steady equilibrium" millions of Dutch men and women, who are for the most part apolitical and only concerned with their personal welfare, and get them to go out into the streets to protest, make their voices heard and clash in debates.

The force that set the country in motion and divided it into opponents (obviously in the majority) and supporters of missile deployment is quite complex. It includes the fear of a

nuclear apocalypse, special concern for the land, which has been reclaimed from the sea with perseverance and toil over the centuries, and the characteristic Dutch habit of planning thoroughly for the future. The choice between accepting U.S. missiles in the Netherlands and rejecting them is just the tip of the iceberg.

The Dutch have now for the first time given serious thought to who decides their fate, the government chosen by them or NATO, controlled from the other side of the ocean. (The Constitution, incidentally, prohibits the surrender to any outside party of the sovereign right to declare war.) Should the Netherlands obediently follow the lead of NATO or will it be able to play a more tangible role in Europe? Will the Dutch be more secure thanks to U.S. missiles, a drastically new factor in the strategic situation of their country, which previously had only tactical nuclear weapons on its territory? A well-informed official at the Dutch Foreign Ministry said: "The Dutch feel insecure. We are 'shoulder to shoulder with the United States,' and at the same time finding ourselves more and more often in disagreement with it. Previously, the Europeans in NATO turned away from many cardinal problems, especially the drafting of security strategies. But today an awareness is growing that Europe should have a say in the North Atlantic alliance and stand up for its own interests."

The first anti-nuclear battle in the Netherlands brought victory to the majority: the Dutch rejected the American neutron bomb. But the second battle, that against the missiles, lasted almost six years and was won by the government.

Here, briefly, is the background to the debate.

In December 1979 NATO approved a plan to deploy U.S. first-strike nuclear weapons in Western Europe, with the Netherlands slated to receive 48 cruise missiles.

In June 1984 the Dutch government, under pressure from the public, postponed its decision on the missiles, simultaneously linking it to the overall

number of Soviet medium-range missiles in the European and Asian (sic!) parts of the U.S.S.R.

In November 1985 the Lubbers government gave consent to missile deployment—in the teeth of the view of the overwhelming majority of the population, opposition parties, trade unions and public organizations. A quirk of Western democracy: four million adults (out of a total population of 14.5 million) signed an appeal for the missiles to be rejected.

In December 1985 Parliament opened debates on a five-year agreement with Washington (plus one year for notification) to build and operate missile sites and deploy missiles as from 1988.

In February 1986 Parliament approved the agreement.

So the decision has been taken. But is the issue really closed?

Thorn in the Flesh

I talked to officials of the Christian Democratic Appeal, a partner in the ruling coalition. Party ideologist Arie Oostlander and M. A. Kolster, secretary of the foreign affairs committee, thought that the matter really was closed. The debates on the missile problem were over and hardly likely to be reopened in the election campaign (elections have been scheduled for May). Our conversation (before the ratification of the agreement) then ran as follows.

Kolster. Two diametrically opposite ideologies have been confronting each other on the European continent since the second world war. That is why it is necessary to build up defences, deploy missiles and take other measures. The Netherlands does not have much leeway in decision-making: we are a member of NATO and should act accordingly.

New Times. How does decision on missiles tally with the stipulation of the government White Paper on Defence: "Along with the need for a justifiable policy on nuclear armaments, there is a scarcely smaller need for adequate support for such a policy in society"?

Oostlander. It is the anti-war movement that is mostly to blame. Peace campaigners have an irresponsible approach to the problem and are fanning differences.

New Times. What has been planned by the present government to mark the International Year of Peace, for the observance of which your representative at the U.N. voted?

Oostlander. We do not concern ourselves directly with this matter. The Peace Year is a matter for organizations of young people.



"My name is Sophie, I am against nuclear missiles," reads this placard worn by a little girl at a demonstration in Amsterdam. Most people in the Netherlands are opposed to Tomahawks on their soil, but Parliament has chosen to disregard public opinion.

TASS photo

We could hardly have expected the leaders of the Christian Democratic Appeal to answer differently, although there were some people in the parliamentary ruling party who had levelled criticism at government policy. What amazed us was the haste and even bravado with which these politicians had "closed" the complex question. It was almost as if they lacked confidence in future developments.

In Clingendael, a park in a Hague suburb, stands a 17th-century mansion which once belonged to a noble family. During the second world war it was the residence of the Nazi administrator of the occupied Netherlands, and now it

is the seat of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations. Since 1983 studies at the institute have been financed by the ministries of defence, foreign affairs and public education. The institute trains and advises prospective leaders of various government agencies. The leisurely pace of academic life in the old house seems far removed from the political storms of the past few months.

We asked the institute's director, H. J. Neuman, for his view of the present-day situation in the Netherlands. Parliament was at the time debating the missile agreement.

"NATO has been taught a good lesson," he said. "It is absurd to take a decision 4-5 years before it is to be implemented. The next time the allies will be wiser. The failure of the Dutch government to take a decision right away gave a free hand to the peace movement and created a division in society. Now the missiles are a thorn in the government's flesh. The opposition Labour Party will also find the going tough in the elections. If it continues to oppose the missiles, it will attract votes—but the Right-wing parties will refuse any coalition with it. If it revises its position, however, it will lose votes but be welcome in any coalition."

The director, abandoning diplomacy, made it clear that the screws should be tightened right away....

The Dutch authorities tried to "reassure" peace campaigners in their own way some years ago. They set up an Advisory Council for Peace and Security. One of the council's main recommendations to the government in the past few years was to follow the NATO course. Council members willingly discuss the situation in the country and even show a measure of realism in doing so. According to the council's vice-president, Professor Egbert Boeker, the debates on missiles are bound to be reopened as a result of further scientific and technological progress: the missiles will have to be either modernized or removed in five years' time.

But what does Labour, the leading opposition party, think of the future?

"We will not cooperate on the deployment of missiles in 1988," I was told by Maarten van Traa, international secretary of the Labour Party. "There is little likelihood, of course, that the newly elected government would unilaterally tear up the agreement with the U.S.... We are raising many issues in our election campaign and the missile problem is one of the most important. We are going to emphasize the need to improve relations between all

states in Europe and will draw attention to some of the Soviet disarmament proposals."

Meanwhile, in his address to an extraordinary Labour congress, Labour leader Joop den Uyl welcomed Mikhail Gorbachev's initiatives for the complete elimination of medium-range missiles in the European zone.

Victories and Setbacks

In planning future campaigns the organizers of the mass movement against NATO's nuclear plans concentrate on the vital problems of disarmament. "We are not going to surrender," Sienie Strikwerda, member of the leadership of the No to Cruise Missiles national coordinating committee, said with a smile. "At present we are discussing our plans. One proposal is to organize a civil disobedience campaign. We are also thinking of staging a protest in front of Parliament. We would like to involve people in a campaign against Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative and we think it necessary, too, to attack anti-Soviet stereotypes, which are firmly embedded in the minds of some of our compatriots."

It is these anti-Soviet stereotypes that have prevented the emergence of a united front of those opposed to missiles and desirous of a new policy for the country. They have become a stumbling block in the way of the Dutch peace movement. The movement temporarily retreated not only before the NATO military and political machine but also before itself, when at a crucial point in the anti-missile campaign, to the joy of the NATO chiefs, the leaders of a major Dutch organization of peace campaigners, the Inter-Church Peace Council, initiated a debate on "the equal responsibility of the superpowers" for the arms race in Europe (and this at a time when the U.S.S.R. was making the West one constructive proposal after another and setting an example unilaterally) and then began looking for malcontents in the Soviet Union and pompously held some of them up as "the true peace movement" in the U.S.S.R. They also charged Moscow with inciting ideological strife between the systems and thus "blocking agreements" (at a time when calls for a "crusade" against the U.S.S.R. were sounding from across the ocean). All these "revelations" were barriers in the way of cooperation between the anti-war movements in socialist countries and Dutch peace campaigners. As a consequence, the Dutch peace movement became virtually the only one in the West without any effective contact with partners in

the East. Fortunately, the Dutch themselves are now beginning gradually to pull down these barriers.

Despite all their difficulties, however, the Dutch peace campaigners have won a remarkable victory. They have awakened millions of their compatriots to the need for practical action for a genuine, non-nuclear national security.

Small wonder that the ruling coalition was in such a hurry to close the missile question, so inconvenient to it on the eve of the elections. Small wonder that the government has lately been drawing public attention to its plans to drop some of the country's earlier nuclear commitments to NATO, such as the maintenance of two squadrons of F-16 jets and Orion planes. The scheme has misfired, however, and earned the government a rebuke from NATO headquarters rather than cheers from the electorate. The Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, General Bernard Rogers, was dispatched urgently to The Hague to tell the recalcitrant Dutch that the deployment of new nuclear missiles in the Netherlands by no means relieved them of their other commitments. The general added that under the nuclear strategy of the alliance, if a conflict broke out, as many NATO members as possible should become immediately involved in it.

The general's bluntness was fresh proof that the Dutch peace campaigners had an uphill struggle ahead.

* * *

Amsterdam is a city of countless canals and 400 bridges, the first planned city in the world. It is a hub of business activity, the world's fourth largest financial centre. It is a city where organ-grinders roam the streets and bankers consider that exhibitions of modern art in their offices set the right tone. It is a city in which houses resemble ships and boats have been converted into houses—it is cheaper that way, and there is not enough housing for everyone on dry land. The most impressive peace activities in the country also take place in Amsterdam.

We were taken through the embankment-like street of Amsterdam by a Dutch journalist friend. Our attention was caught by a strange sculpture in the square in front of the Rijksmuseum, the largest art treasury in the city. Our friend told us that it had been erected by participants in the first anti-missile demonstration in 1982. As we peered more closely at it we saw that the snow-white missile enmeshed in barbed wire was composed of two embracing figures. Does it symbolize the last nuclear embrace? Or perhaps, an attempt to break out of nuclear thralldom.

G. SIDOROVA
Our Special Correspondent

LEBANON

TORMENTED BUT UNVANQUISHED

EVGENY KORSHUNOV

It was not just on television and video that we were seeing it all. Here in the frontline mountain village of Bedias I recalled a trip to another province in South Lebanon, to a village whose name had made world headlines, Houmin el-Tahta. Its tragic fate was shared by many South Lebanese villages raided by Israeli punitive forces.

The Tragedy of Houmin el-Tahta

We came to Houmin el-Tahta on the day after the Israeli bloodbath. Smoke still rose from the ruins of houses blown up by Israeli commandos. The narrow streets of the mountain village were buried in debris, and littered with broken glass, shreds of burnt clothing and pieces of broken furniture. The air smelled of burning and the acrid stench of explosives. Spent machine- and tommy-gun bullets were to be seen everywhere.

The tiny village square where we stopped suddenly filled with locals. All were dressed in black. They were coming from the cemetery after burying in a mass grave 14 of their fellow villagers killed by the Israelis the day before.

Abu Mahmud Ballud, the local teacher, whose house had also been blown up by the raiders, had come a little earlier and managed to tell us about the raid. The Israelis had surrounded the village at night and attacked at dawn, firing at windows and hurling grenades. With loud hailer they ordered villagers to gather in the courtyard of the local Shiite mosque. They separated the men from the women and started interrogating them. Meanwhile commandos were methodically mining and blowing up houses. One house was destroyed along with a mother and her infant.

Another house, belonging to 80-year-old Alia Balbaki, was first ransacked. Having found a little money—the poor woman's meagre savings—they "confiscated" it, set alight what remained of the furniture and blew up part of the house. Alia Balbaki was still pouring water on the smouldering embers when we entered the small courtyard. The

puny, stooped old woman drew water from a yard iap in a plastic bucket.

"The bucket is all I have left."

"Tel Aviv claims that we Lebanese defending our land are terrorists," said Abu Latif Sein, former minister and member of parliament for the city of Nabatiya, who had arrived in the village at almost the same time as us. "No, the terrorists are those who are occupying it today and committing these crimes, those who send tanks and planes against peaceful unprotected villages in South Lebanon and who are destroying our homes with shells and explosives. But let Tel Aviv know: we love our land and will defend it to the last. Resistance to the occupiers and their hirelings is mounting with every passing day and we are countering force with force. We want the invaders to leave our land unconditionally."

An elderly man pushed his way through the crowd towards us. He was introduced as Abu Abbas Hamdan, the father of General Abbas Hamdan, who signed the May 17

A peasant family in the village of Naqura in the so-called "security zone" on the Lebanese-Israeli border.



Continued from our issue No. 10.

agreement with the Israelis. His house was not spared either. It was ransacked and defiled.

It was wrong, however, to say that General Abbas Hamdan "signed" the infamous May 17 agreement, imposed in 1983 by Tel Aviv and Washington, under the threat of heavy guns from the warship New Jersey and the bayonets of the Israeli army of occupation. He was merely a member of the Lebanese delegation that took part in drawing up the agreement, which was renounced by the Lebanese government after less than a year. And the attack on the house of a member of the Lebanese delegation was clearly a punishment to which Tel Aviv had decided to subject the general and his family in revenge for its political setback in the Middle East, and an act of petty reprisal. In Houmin el-Tahta the Israelis perpetrated far more heinous crimes.

We saw the names of their victims in red paint on concrete slabs in the village cemetery. Almost all were old or elderly people, and there was the young mother and her baby. One of those murdered was an 80-year-old herdsman who was driving cows out to graze when the Israelis surrounded the village. He was killed to stop him raising the alarm and impeding the operation. Later Zionist propaganda claimed that in Houmin el-Tahta the "Israeli defence army" had destroyed "a nest of terrorists." In fact, there were only four young men of military age in the village on that day: three lads in their early twenties and a Lebanese soldier on leave. All were shot dead.

"My brother Mohammad carried no weapons," says 20-year-old Fatmi Issa, sobbing. "But now all our people are in the resistance movement and I will take up arms to get revenge, for everything!"

The murdered man's father, Mustafa Issa, a popular poet in South Lebanon, sat grief-stricken in a spacious guest-room in the male half of the house. The room was packed with people who had come to offer their condolences: to embrace him, press cheeks against his, sit for a while with lowered heads and drink coffee in silence—all to the sound of weeping from the female part of the house, where, dressed in mourning, Mohammad's mother sobbed, her body rocking, her head buried in her hands. She was surrounded by neighbours. From time to time wailing women raised their voices. They were not professional wailers. Today there is scarcely a woman in South Lebanon who does not wail for one or other of her relatives and loved ones who have fallen at the hands of the Israeli invaders or their hirelings. Wailing is the lot of every woman in South Lebanon today.

We planned to go from Houmin el-Tahta to the neighbouring village of Jbaa, another of the ten South Lebanese

villages raided by the Israelis on the same day as Houmin el-Tahta. On the eve of the raid the Israeli defence minister publicly threatened to turn the whole of Lebanon into scorched earth unless the South Lebanese patriots ceased to resist the Israeli occupiers and the Antoine Lahad mercenaries. The raid of ten defenceless vil-

in the street in front of your house, under your window, is always unexpected. And this time was not an exception.

I was looking over the notes I had brought back from another visit to the frontline areas of South Lebanon when pandemonium broke out. When this happens old Beirut hands rush into the



These fishermen in Tyre, South Lebanon, had a narrow escape when their boat was fired on by Israeli troops.

Photos by author

lages was meant to lend substance to the threat. However, Tel Aviv did not expect a large group of foreign newsmen to arrive promptly on the scene of the crime to witness the Israeli atrocities and tell the world about them.

After leaving Houmin el-Tahta we turned onto the road to Jbaa only to be stopped by peasants running towards us. "Turn back!" they shouted. "You'll run into shooting. The road is under fire and you can't get through."

Having got word of our arrival, the Israeli occupiers and their accomplices decided to prevent us from reaching Jbaa. However, what we saw in Houmin el-Tahta was typical of any South Lebanese village subjected to an Israeli raid: mass shootings of old people, women and children, pillage and rape, peasant houses blown up and burnt. In Jbaa we would have seen the same thing as in Houmin el-Tahta.

One of Many Thousands

Accustomed as one becomes, after many years' living in Beirut, to the constant background of shooting, rounds of machine-gun fire, blasts of grenades and mines, the roar of a battle erupting

depths of their flats to avoid stray bullets and fragments of shells and those caught in a shootout in the street seek safety in nearby shops and houses or just throw themselves onto the pavement and try to crawl under a parked car.

This time, however, it was not combat shooting. The shots fired under my window were unhurried and unaimed, the "combatants" firing at random. The firing was, as they say in Beirut, "patterned," rhythmical, keeping the time of a military salute. This is how they shoot at weddings and funerals, at the birth of a child or on religious holidays. To be sure, this "peaceful" firing too claims its victims with stray bullets. But that can't be helped. It is a centuries-old tradition.

The occasion this time was the funeral of my neighbour, a 17-year-old youth whom I had seen grow up. He had come to live on our street with his parents and numerous brothers and sisters eight years before. That was in the spring of 1978, when the Israeli aggressors launched their first large-scale invasion of Lebanon and occupied the southern part of the country. Hundreds of thousands of refugees fled to Beirut along the maritime highway under the bombs of Israeli planes and shell fire from ships. Tel Aviv made no secret of its aim, which was to drive as many people out of South Lebanon as possible, forcing them to abandon their homes and land which would then be annexed and settled by immigrant Jews from other countries under the demagog-

ic slogan: "Peopleless land for a landless people."

At first there was indeed a mass exodus from South Lebanon. Thousands of families reached Beirut and found themselves without shelter or the means of livelihood. They put up camps in empty lots and squares, on beaches and pavements. Government, public and charitable organizations helped as much as they could providing food and medical supplies, army tents and blankets and accommodating them in schools and offices. But it was impossible to help all of them. According to the local papers, there were some 600,000 refugees. Desperate, they began to occupy vacant flats.

There were squatters on our street too. They arrived armed and took over three storeys in a luxury house next to where I lived. One could see from the balcony that large families had turned even the spacious recessed balconies into bedrooms by throwing mattresses and mats onto the floor. They could only be evicted by force, but they were armed. At first the landlord tried to squeeze them out by cutting off the electricity and water. But in the end he gave up and agreed on a nominal rent. It couldn't be anything other than nominal, given that the lodgers were impoverished South Lebanese sharecropping peasants.

A few months later Tel Aviv had to withdraw its troops from South Lebanon in the face of freedom fighters and under pressure from world public opinion. By that time Zionist plans to "depopulate" South Lebanon had been exposed. Patriotic parties and organizations, in particular the Cultural Council of South Lebanon, called on the refugees to return to their native parts to prevent them falling into the hands of invaders. Caravans of refugees set out from Beirut and headed south.

Only one albeit very large family remained on our street. Part of the family returned to South Lebanon, but some stayed behind. They tried to turn the small patch of land in front of the neighbouring house into a kitchen garden. In two or three years the squatters were accepted residents on our street. The adults got to know and made friends with their neighbours and the children played with neighbours' children.

The boys in the family, six or seven of them, proved to be enterprising and hardworking. One morning I saw them lead neighbourhood boys in clearing a vacant lot under my windows which over the years locals had turned into a malodorous refuse tip. The site was cleared. One of the parents brought a bulldozer and levelled it. They put boulders at opposite ends to make a football pitch. Now the place rang with children's voices from early morning

fill dark. In due course the stones were replaced with piping sunk into the ground and the boys got themselves football outfits.

Time passed. The boys on our street played football and began to grow up. From about the age of 10 or 12 they started carrying guns. They stuck them on their backs under their trouser belts. In a couple of years they were sporting camouflage dress and carrying submachine guns and grenades.

However, in the summer of 1982, when the Israelis besieged West Beirut for almost three months and tried to take it by storm, the boys on our street were still too young to take part in the battle. I may be mistaken though: I did see some 12- to 14-year-olds among the city's defenders in those days. And in 1978 I met a shy 14-year-old boy in South Lebanon who had set four Israeli armoured vehicles ablaze with his anti-tank grenade thrower.

The summer of 1985 was a very difficult summer in Beirut, the most difficult in my memory with the exception of the summer of 1982. Forced to pull out of one South Lebanese area after another, the occupiers used their agents to provoke strife in Lebanon. Tel Aviv sought to disrupt attempts by the Lebanese national patriotic forces and Syria to restore peace, security, and national concord. Right-wing Christian extremists in fact ranged themselves with Right-wing Moslems, rekindling the flames of civil war in Beirut and other major Lebanese cities. The situation took a turn for the worse each time the Rachid Karame government, the national patriotic forces of Lebanon and Syrian leaders took another major step towards settling the long-drawn-out Lebanese crisis, an outcome dreaded by Tel Aviv and its masters whose Middle East policy had suffered a grave setback in Lebanon. That is why Israeli agents are attempting to divide Lebanese patriots, set them against one another and bleed them white in fratricidal feuds.

Fierce fighting took place on the "green line" dividing the Lebanese capital into eastern and western sectors, controlled respectively by the patriotic forces and the Right-wing Christians, as well as in Palestinian refugee camps, and the crowded quarters of West Beirut. Every day I saw the sons of the former squatter family, now full-grown and bearded, pack themselves into an old Mercedes and drive off. They wore army uniforms and carried Tommy guns and grenade throwers. These were the very boys who had played football, growing up before my eyes.

And now one of them was being buried. His comrades carried the coffin through our street firing into the air. They were followed by the family of the

deceased in deep mourning. At the head of the procession old people and elderly men in traditional South Lebanese peasant garb walked in silence. Women sobbed. They were followed by a crowd of about thirty fighters. The procession turned the corner and moved into the next street, but for a long time I still heard the submachine guns firing their salute.

On the same day I saw a printed black-framed picture stuck on the wall of my house. Looking at me was a boy with a thin youthful beard. Of course I knew him well, having met him on our street every day over many years. I had always noticed how respectfully he greeted adults. Now this boy was dead.

I was joined by the janitor from the neighbouring house who looked at the face in the black frame and shook his head disconsolately.

"How was he killed?" I asked.

"He was killed, that's all" I heard in reply. I realized that there was no point in asking any further questions. And anyway it was improper. In Lebanon today a lot of questions are just not asked.

And yet how and under what circumstances did the Lebanese youth die? On the "green line"? Or in a shootout in the neighbouring quarter? In the daily rocket mortar and artillery shelling of West Beirut by Right-wing Christians? Or was his body brought from the frontline regions of South Lebanon where he was born and where he had gone to fight the Israeli invaders? If this last were the case the fact would be especially carefully concealed. For the Israelis and their hirelings in the "South Lebanese army" of Antoine Lahad take brutal revenge on relatives and friends of resistance fighters by incarcerating them in order to extract information about their comrades and fellow fighters, blowing up their houses and evicting them.

The time will come of course when one will be able to ask any question and get an answer in Lebanon. But not today. The fates of many thousands of people are too deeply involved in the problem and the political game, in which the destiny of the whole nation is at stake, is far too complex.

TAKING UP A POINT

Is it not time, 40 years after the war, to stop writing about "Japanese militarism"? In the military sphere Japan does no more than is necessary for defence. Indeed, even the U.S., which Japan attacked at Pearl Harbor, is now its close political ally, regardless of tough commercial competition.

Robert OYAMA
San Francisco, U.S.A.

Our
staff
writer
**VLADIMIR
OVSYANNIKOV**
replies:



The above letter couldn't have been more timely. A surprising sidelight on the nature of the relations between the U.S. and Japan emerged during the recent Washington-Tokyo consultations on security.

You probably know that the U.S. Administration has constantly urged Japan to build up its military strength. Yet suddenly, during these consultations, the Americans said they were satisfied with what had already been achieved. They even said that a further intensification of the Japanese defence programme would be undesirable. Why did they see fit to hint to Japan that it should not try too hard to attain the status of a military power?

Several explanations were forthcoming in the Japanese press. Some viewed the American stand as a recognition of Tokyo's contribution to the building up of the two powers' military presence in the Far East. And with good reason: in terms of combat potential, the Japanese armed forces rank sixth amongst the armies of the capitalist countries. It has also been suggested that Washington has eased the pressure on Japan because it has gained a better understanding of Japanese defence policy. You have probably read that the plans for militarization are causing concern in Japan. They are also causing concern in those Southeast Asian countries where the horrors of the Japanese occupation are still remembered. Another possible explanation put forward was that the U.S. does not want Japan to be too independent in the military sphere. Could this have been prompted by fears that the Japanese military machine would at some stage get out of American control?

Japan's economic successes are common knowledge. The country's ruling circles believe that its political influence on the international scene should be correspondingly impressive. According to some politicians in Tokyo, an essential component that is still lacking is a strong army, navy and air force, capable not only of "passive" defence under the U.S. umbrella but of independently dealing with strategic objectives, albeit initially only in the Asian Pacific region.

There is very real basis for these ideas. Japan has every prerequisite for becoming a military power. It would not take much time to adapt the flexible production systems in Japanese factories from, say, making cars to making tanks and armoured personnel carriers. Japan is capable, many military authorities believe, of launching the production of nuclear missiles at any time. It is simply a question of making a political decision.

Of course, it can be argued that the share of military orders in the total industrial output is less than half of one per cent. But this half per cent provides for more than 90 per cent of the armaments of the self-defence forces. Japan's industrial base makes it possible to double military production quickly without any substantial extra effort. Japan is fast becoming a major arms exporter, so much so that U.S. arms manufacturers are beginning to fear its competition.

The principle of latent possibilities also underlies the composition of the Japanese armed forces, seventy per cent of whose personnel are officers. It is a skeleton army that can quickly be increased to 1.5 million men, provided a political decision is made to that effect.

So far there are no grounds for taking such a decision. Let us hope that they will never arise. Nonetheless, it is possible to work towards a goal gradually without attracting notice. Japan has readily committed itself to blocking international straits and protecting lines of communication for up to 1,000 miles from its shores "in an emergency." This is nothing but an expansion of

its military influence. A base for the Japanese navy and air force is being built on the island of Iwo Jima in the Pacific, 1,200 kilometres from Tokyo. What is this if not a first step towards creating a network of bases away from its shores?

Japan's naval forces are soon to join the American Navy in the annual Fleet X manoeuvres which will cover the Pacific and parts of the Indian Ocean. Who can guarantee that Japan will not take the next step towards expanding its "zone of responsibility" by bringing its combat ships onto the waterways leading to the oil riches of the Persian Gulf? In terms of tonnage, Japan's combat and auxiliary naval vessels far exceed the U.S. Seventh Fleet.

The history of Japan's participation in two world wars attests that in pursuit of its imperialist goals it has always attempted to ally itself with a strong partner. By joining the Entente during the first world war, Japan, operating at a remove from the main theatre of the war, acquired German possessions in China and the Pacific. During the second world war, contrary to the expectations of Germany and Italy, their allies in the Tripartite Pact, Japanese militarists preferred to strike not to the north but to the south, occupying strategically important and resource-rich areas of Southeast Asia and Oceania.

What assurance is there that history will not repeat itself? If even Washington is beginning to have misgivings about Japan's growing military-industrial potential and armed forces, what is to be said of the U.S.S.R. which is the prime target of the alliance between the two countries? It spells a new source of military danger close to our borders. We are not raking up the past. Our aim, as the 27th CPSU Congress has pointed out, is to "take the edge off the military confrontation in various parts of Asia." One cannot allow a repetition, on an immeasurably larger scale, of the tragedy the peoples of the U.S.S.R., the U.S., Asia and the Japanese themselves lived through forty years ago.

PS POSTSCRIPT

Doesn't Add Up

According to the Pentagon, it has spent a mere \$3.7 million on all its military construction in Honduras since 1983. It is hard to believe that that would be enough to cover the cost of the large air force base in Palmerola, the powerful electronic snooping centre on the island of El Tigre, the modern strategic highways, and the dozens of runways capable of taking sophisticated heavy bombers. Doubtful U.S. Congressional experts have accused the Pentagon of cooking the books.

The Richer the Ruder

A British hotel poll, the West Berlin Tagesspiegel relates, shows that the richer clients are rude, arrogant, impatient, carping, and often try to dodge restaurant bills.

Women's Lib



Liechtenstein women have just won the vote, the last

in Europe to do so. But, says the Vienna newspaper Die Presse, a subsequent referendum quashed a proposed bill to introduce full equality between the sexes.

Self-Employed

The Vienna court has ruled that as from this year Austria's prostitutes will be classified as self-employed, the West German weekly Sonntags Actual reports. From now on they will have to pay income tax plus a turnover tax like any business. However, the court did not specify how the turnover would be assessed.

"Whites Only"



U.S. extremists plan to make the five states of Washington, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana and Oregon a "whites only" zone, expelling all ethnic minor-

ities, says a statement issued by the coalition of U.S. public organizations for civil rights. The extremists blame the minorities for all the country's economic and social ills and are assigning an important role to ex-convicts, who are to be settled in the zone and used to terrorize "sub-human" Americans, commented a leader of the black civil rights movement.

Till Death Do Us Part



The West German Hamburger Morgenpost says that one in five murders in the F.R.G. is committed by the victim's spouse. This will doubtless cause some courting couples to sit up and take notice.

Anything Goes

Under the heading "Industrial Espionage Is Booming," the London Observer notes that as well as eavesdropping, computer break-ins and bribery, elaborate deception is also used. To illustrate this, the article quotes the following story. The manager of a large British company was invited to an employment agency and offered a more lucrative post with another firm, provided he answered a set of questions. However, it soon transpired that no such employment agency existed and

that the interviewer bore an uncanny resemblance to the technical manager of a rival firm.

"Arms Professor"

When the West German firm Rheinmetall was caught smuggling arms into South Africa, Hamburg University students, the Portuguese Diario de Noticias notes, proposed investing the firm's president with the title of "arms professor" for services to the study of armaments technology and related markets.

Sobering Thoughts



Drinking and drug abuse have been responsible for 48 railway crashes in the U.S. over the past ten years, a report issued by the National Transportation Safety Board says. The document, which has been submitted to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, calls for firmer legislation. Only the complete absence of alcohol in the bloodstream can be considered safe for pilots, engine drivers and motorists on duty, not the present 0.04 per cent limit, the Board's vice-chairman emphasized.

Drawings
by V. Chakiridis

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**A VIEW OF THE U.S.S.R. TODAY
AND A GLIMPSE INTO ITS FUTURE
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AND FINAL DOCUMENTS
OF THE 27th CONGRESS
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY
OF THE SOVIET UNION**

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CALL FROM CARTAGENA

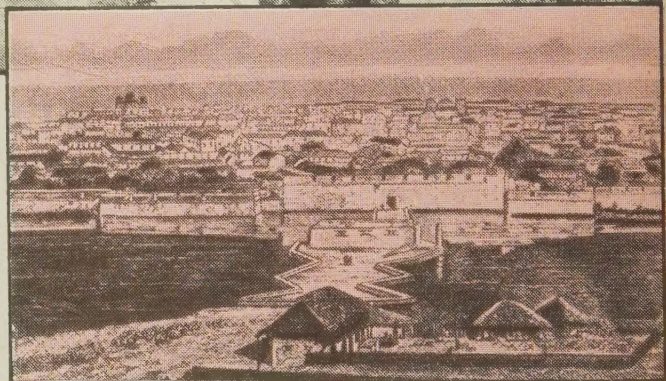
In the year 228 B.C. the Carthaginians, who had invaded the Iberian Peninsula, built on the Mediterranean coast a port which their leader Hasdrubal, brother of the famed Hannibal, called Carthago Nova (the new Carthage). Subsequent conquerors of the city—the Romans, the Visigoths, the Byzantines and the Arabs—pronounced it variously until the 13th century, when, after the capture of the coast by the Spaniards, it acquired its present name Cartagena.

THE WORLD IN PICTURES



The name appeared on the map of South America after conquistador Pedro de Heredia invaded the continent. In 1533, on the shores of a cosy bay the first fortifications of Cartagena de las Indias were built.

Today Cartagena is an important administrative and industrial centre of Colombia, the sea gates of the country. Traces of the colonial epoch remain in the distinctive architecture of the city—the cathedral, built in 1538-86, the fortress of San Felipe de Barajas, a masterpiece of 17th-century engineering, and the Palace of Inquisition, which took nearly 64 years to build. To preserve these old



Cartagena today and in Bolívar's time.

buildings the municipal authorities have banned the construction of modern buildings inside the Old Town. In 1985, UNESCO proclaimed the city part of the cultural heritage of mankind.

One of the city squares is called Plaza de los Martires in memory of the heroes who fell in the War of Independence. In 1812, after the fall of the First Venezuelan Republic, Simon Bolivar, with a handful of followers, found refuge here. "Its noble citizens," Bolivar later recalled, "arms in hand fought the army of the oppressor who had enslaved almost the whole country." Here, on December 15, 1812, The Liberator wrote his famous "Letter to the citizens of New Grenada," which has gone down in history as the Cartagena Manifesto. It was the first appeal ever made for the solidarity of all the Latin American peoples in the struggle for freedom and progress.

Today the enemies of these peoples are different from those of Bolivar's time. Washington is trying to dictate its

Cartagenian.

will to the Latin American governments, the transnational corporations are escalating the exploitation of manpower and natural resources, and international finance capital has the region gripped in the toils of debts beyond their power to repay. It is symbolic that in June 1984 the representatives of 11 debtor countries met in Cartagena to discuss jointly the problems of their foreign indebtedness and to work out a common strategy in the fight against the diktat of the creditors. It is equally appropriate that their organization should be known as the Cartagena Group. More and more Latin Americans are coming to see that only by acting together will it be possible to counteract the pressure from without and to win genuine independence. Bolivar's call for unity, sounded many years ago from Cartagena, is heard today by ever more people on that continent.

V. KULISTIKOV

Photos by Y. Korolyov